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ABSTRACT

The essays in this book represent the substance of the 40th annual Claremont Reading Conference, the theme of which was "Reading, Thought, and Language," Among the nineteen essays included are "Cognitive Development and Reading" by David Elkind; "Behavioral Objectives and Teaching Instruction" by Herbert Simons; "Toward Personal Growth through Reading" by David Greene; "Realism in Children's Books" by Robert Burch; "How Should the Culturally Different Child Be Taught to Read? by Sarah Moskovitz; "Diverse Aspects of Language Development as Related to Reading" by Alice Paul; "Discovering Thinking by Listening to Language" by John Regan; and "Reading and the Home Environment" by Albert H. Koppenhaver. (TS)

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CLAREMONT READING CONFERENCE

Sponsored by the Claremont Graduate School

THIRTY-EIGHTH YEARBOOK

Edited by
MALCOLM P. DOUGLASS

Special Theme for the Forty-first Annual
Claremont Reading Conference:

Reading, Thought, and Language

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Introduction to the Yearbook

Reading, Thought, and Language served as the special theme for the 40th annual Claremont Reading Conference, which was held on the campuses of the Claremont Colleges February 9th and 10th, 1974. The essays in this volume represent the substance, but hardly the totality, of all that occurred during those two days. For example, extended discussions followed the more formal presentations, and workshops engaged the interests of a number of Conference participants. These aspects of the meetings at Claremont obviously could not be recorded here.

The Peter Lincoln Spencer Lectures were inaugurated with this year's Conference to honor the man who founded this series of meetings in 1932 and who directed it until 1958 when he became Professor Emeritus at the Claremont Graduate School. It is the plan to invite persons to participate in this new lecture series whose professional life reflects in some particular way that of Dr. Spencer's original and creative contributions to education. It was therefore appropriate that Roach Van Allen, Professor of Education at the University of Arizona, initiate the lectureship with his address, "Reading Is Creative Living," which appears as the first essay in the present volume.

A broad concept of reading behavior serves as the raison d'être for the continuation of the Claremont Reading Conference. The meetings are planned with the primary purpose of furthering the exploration of this broad view, in which reading is considered to be the process of creating meaning for sensed stimuli. In this conceptualization, the reading of printed and written words is viewed as part of a much larger process, that is, the process by which an individual comes to know. In this larger sense, reading is thought to be the process of creating meaning for anything in the environment for which the reader can develop an awareness. Reading consequently occurs with regard to a large number of stimuli, among which are printed or written words—those symbols that have been invented to stand for oral language. Each type of reading, then, has common and special attributes to be considered in the

learning to read process, since it is obvious that anyone who would read a symbol system which humans have invented to represent their oral language requires some special kinds of knowledge. Beyond that, however, there are no doubt many common elements. When we read gestures or faces, fault lines or works of art, along with such formal "other" symbol systems as mathematical or musical notation, therefore, we are engaging in "knowing" activities that, along with the reading of printed words, have common elements. Just how important these common elements are in evoking reading behavior is not clearly understood. We suspect that they are by far the most important in stimulating any type of reading. That is, the knowledge of special attributes in any kind of reading may not only be relatively unimportant, it may actually be peripheral. Meanwhile, it is well known where we concentrate our efforts in the teaching to read process.

The continued exploration of "reading" at Claremont consequently results in varied fare. Some of the essays appearing this year speak to the broad concept rather directly, others to parts, and still others in contradistinction. We believe, however, that continued dialogue in this direction is important, particularly since we still know so little about the reading process. We hope, consequently, that the reader will find stimulation somewhat out of the ordinary for efforts of this kind within these covers. But the volume itself should also be viewed in the context of the series itself, some recent years of which are still in print with the remaining available through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

For the reader who might wish to consider attending the Conference itself, the 41st meeting will be held on February 8th and 9th, 1975.

MALCOLM P. DOUGLASS, *Director*
Claremont Reading Conference

Reading Is Creative Living

Roach Van Allen

. . . and in the beginning was the word and . . .

Perhaps every story of experience should begin with the word "and." Perhaps it should end with the word "and," too. Don Fabun, in his book, *Communications: The Transfer of Meaning* (3), reminds us that no experience ever begins; there was always something that preceded it. What really begins for us when we think we have a new experience is that our awareness of something begins to clarify in a meaningful way. At the end, the word "and . . ." would remind us that no story ever really ends. Something more will happen after.

Reading Is Creative Living at Claremont

And in July, 1957, I attended the 25th Claremont Reading Conference—my first. *And* I heard Dr. Peter Lincoln Spencer speak. *And* I heard him speak to the same topic that I am using today for the First Peter Lincoln Spencer Lecture. The topic is: *Reading Is Creative Living*. This topic has no beginning. It has no end. What it did have for me in 1957 was a new burst of hope that some of what I had been thinking and trying to formulate into a curriculum design was not only possible, but that it existed already.

What I heard Peter Spencer say on that hot July morning in 1957 is so profound and so timely for every one of us today that on this happy and historic occasion for the Claremont Reading Conference in its 41st session, I have decided to share his topic with you. From one brief lecture I want to quote so you can hear some of what I heard.

At the top of the list is a simple statement that has had a great influence on my own life and my own work.* It is: ". . . *reading* consists in changing human behavior into humane behavior. In other words creating humane beings from human beings."

To that point in my professional career I had had aspirations to be a humane teacher. But I had never linked those aspirations with reading instruction. Prior influences of study

* All of the Spencer quotations are taken from "Reading Is Creative Living," in the 22nd Yearbook of the Claremont College Reading Conference.

and example have led me to work on reading as an assortment of comprehension skills, word analysis skills, vocabulary recognition, getting the main idea, and reading for detail. I thought that somehow a child could learn how to read through some mysterious process of putting all of these elements together. I thought, and sincerely so, that one human being could teach another one *how to read.*

I had invested most of my humane efforts in what I called "creative writing." My rich experience with children in creative writing had opened up some understandings that were direct links between personal language production and the reproduction of language of others through reading. I suppose that I was fearful of making much of these understandings because I lacked research evidence to support my feelings.

Then I heard Peter Spencer say fearlessly,

> Perceiving is creative. Receiving may, on the other hand, be predominantly mechanical. But that which is perceived by one reader may be altogether different from that which another reader perceives. In reading, any particular stimulus is likely to be affected in perception by multitudes of imagery which are not in the external world even remotely associated with the particular stimulus which was received. Consequently, we assert with confidence that *reading is creative living.*

Questions flashed in my mind! I was puzzled!

Is Dr. Spencer using the word, *reading,* in the same way that I am using the word, *writing?*

Is creative writing really creative reading?

Are creative writing and creative reading linked together to contribute significantly to creative living?

The years that have intervened from 1957 to the present have provided me the experience, the research evidence, and the confidence to say with Dr. Spencer today that READING IS CREATIVE LIVING!

Strands in Creative Reading

Reading as creative living can be discussed at random or it can be discussed in some framework that is helpful in disseminating the ideas to others. Today, I have chosen to talk about reading in creative living as functioning in three

strands of language activity. These strands overlap and intermingle in functional settings, but they can be described separately in order to understand reading processes in creative living(1).

EXPERIENCING COMMUNICATION

One strand can be called "Experiencing Communication." It is the strand of experience that emphasizes human interaction on a personal basis. In school programs it is

- talking to share personal experiences
- discussing topics of interest with friends
- painting and using all kinds of materials in artful ways to reflect thinking and planning
- humming and chanting as one works
- responding in self-selected ways to rhythmic sounds
- dramatizing ideas of fact and fancy
- role playing characters and parts that are impossible in real life
- experiencing authorship of poems and stories many times and in many ways.

It is in "Experiencing Communication" activities at school that children are integrated into reading processes as creative living. They know from the earliest days of kindergarten that what they can think about and say can be made into reading by an artist teacher. Their ideas and their language appears in beautiful books that are useful in the school program. Any concern they might have had regarding the possibility that their ideas were unworthy and their language inadequate is erased. They know from repeated experiences that they do not have to wait until they are "ready to read" before they can begin. They have been reading all their lives. They do not have to wait until they speak a standard form of language before they can learn from "reading books." They make some of their own to match their language patterns.

Artist teachers who believe that reading is creative living do not have to wait for anything. They participate with their students in what is called *primary reading* at the Claremont Reading Conference. Together, with students, they read:

- the weather—is it hot, cold, dry, wet, stormy, calm?
- people—are they angry, happy, sad, pleasant, bored, cooperative, caring?
- plants—are they dead, alive, blooming, growing, decorative, edible?
- animals—are they old, young, active, hibernating, playful, domesticated, wild, harmful?
- the earth—is it mountainous, rolling, flat, green, sandy, eroded, cultivated?
- machines—are they loud, quiet, moving, large, small, simple, complicated?

Children say the names of things and tell how they move. They describe according to categories of color, size, shape, texture, sound, smell, taste and feelings. They read widely in their human and physical world without the use of *secondary reading*, which at the Claremont Reading Conference refers to reading of printed materials.

STUDYING COMMUNICATION

A second strand, "Studying Communication," emphasizes the understandings required of human beings to use secondary reading skillfully. Students perceive that secondary reading represents streams of sound very much like that which is produced when one is speaking. In print one can expect to find names of things and words of movement over and over. The simple ideas represented by the noun-verb pattern in sentences are extended and elaborated with all kinds of descriptors—just like talking. They discover through a variety of activities which require a close look at printed language that certain words hold streams of sound together in sentences but are empty of meaning in themselves. These are the structure words of language. Most of them were treated in reading programs of the past as the "sight vocabulary of words of highest frequency." When reading is creative living, reading human beings discover that this portion of language is common to all and in all of us. Creativity resides, not in the verbatim reproduction of these words in concocted sentences, but in unique patterning of the language and in the flexible use of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

A recent study by Dr. John K. Sherk (6) undergirded one

more time the fact that children from "hard core poverty" come to school using most of the structure vocabulary in spontaneous expressions. These are the words which have been assigned traditionally to basal readers—preprimer through grade two. The children he studied in Kansas City could have learned to recognize at sight the 220 Dolch List words and still not have been able to read beyond the concocted sentence stage. He found, as we have found in some of our studies at the University of Arizona (2,5,8), that the bulwark against reading success lies in the paucity of primary reading experiences which generate vocabularies of the form class words (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) and in the lack of real experiences with syntactical structures which are typical of secondary reading materials—but not necessarily the syntactical structures used in home-rooted language.

When reading is creative living the reader must feel a close relationship between personal production of language and print. Print must be so familiar that word order, redundancy of patterns, and meanings are highly predictable.

RELATING COMMUNICATION OF OTHERS TO SELF

The third strand in this discussion, "Relating Communication of Others to Self," emphasizes the influences of language and ideas of others on personal language production. Each person's language changes as a result of hearing and reading language as it is used with different meanings and in syntactical patterns not typical of that practiced in spontaneous expression.

It is not just books that one reads to explore the inner thoughts of others and to communicate with persons not present for conversation and discussion. Reading involves response to art and art prints, to sculpture, and to all forms of non-verbal representation of creative and open ideas. It includes interactive thought processes required for intelligent viewing of filmstrips, films, and television programs. It is basic to listening to live music performances and to records of music and stories. Reading as creative living is much more than comprehending what is read. It involves assimilation and integration of ideas through at least four dimensions:

1. *Language acquisition*—an interest in and abilities to

expand personal vocabularies so they are useful and meaningful when reflected in printed passages produced by others.

2. *Language prediction*—an ability to anticipate language in its printed forms to the degree that dealing with print becomes more and more a process of checking out predictions and less and less a process of recognition and analysis of sound-symbol relationships.

3. *Language recognition*—an ability to contact printed forms of language as basic representations of phonological structure, to recognize the redundancy of syntactical structure, and to pick up shades of meaning through recognition of morphological structures such as those in affixes (un-, re-, -ly), signals of time (-ing, -ed, -s), signals of number (-s, -es), and signals of comparison (-er, -est).

4. *Language production*—an emphasis on trying out many forms of communication from many points of view and with many characters, experimenting with numerous literary forms used by authors, editing original manuscripts to include words and phrases which are not characteristic of home-rooted language, increasing fluency through speaking experiences which offer opportunities to say things in new ways, and mastering mechanics of recording language so that others can understand personal ideas when they hear or read them.

Personal response while reading is the goal of any viable reading experience. Responding with someone else's answers to questions the reader did not ask is to deny the real purposes for reading. Ego strength for creative living builds as readers reflect the humanistic qualities of an author, an artist, a teacher, a composer, an architect, a musician, a scientist, or any other contributor to society who is dependent on self-expression for survival.

These three strands which relate the person to language and reading in an instructional program can be explained forever if they are dealt with in creative ways. Every person reads in a different way and every application of language influences is unique to that person. The major idea, however, is summarized by Dr. Spencer when he says:

> There can be little doubt but that what one has experienced is an established part of him, but it may be that we have given

too little concern to what one is becoming. The emphasis upon the past gives the impression that life is a process of fleeing or of smug complacency. The future remains to be created. Here is one's opportunity, one's real challenge.

Sources of Creative Thought for Reading

How can we live and learn with children in ways that permit them *to become*—to be a product of the future rather than a duplicate of the past?

A review of statements of creative persons reveals that they do not work from a studied base of acquired skills and sequenced knowledge. They do not program their learning but remain open to new possibilities. They admit readily that they cannot explain in a rational way the source of their thoughts and their subsequent portrayal of them. Don Fabun collected some statements from creative persons of the world and shared them in his book, *You and Creativity* (4). Here are some of them:

> I somehow cling to the wondrous fancy that in all men hiddenly reside certain wondrous, occult properties . . . in which by some happy but rare incident (as bronze was discovered by the melting of iron and brass in the burning of Corinth) may chance to be called forth.
>
> *Herman Melville*

> From one man, I learned that constructing a business organization could be a creative activity. From a young athlete, I learned that a perfect tackle could be as aesthetic a product as a sonnet and could be approached in the same creative spirit.
>
> *Abraham H. Maslow*

> Sometimes I start with a set subject; or to solve, in a block of stone . . . a sculptural problem I've given myself, and then consciously attempt to build an orderly relationship of forms, which shall express my idea. But if the work is to be more than just sculptural exercise, unexplainable jumps in the process of thought occur; and the imagination plays its part.
>
> *Henry Moore*

> It is to me the most exciting moment—when you have a blank canvas and a big brush full of wet color, and you plunge. It is just like diving into a pond—then you start to swim . . . Once

the instinct and intuition get into the brush tip, the picture *happens*, if it is to be a picture at all.

D. H. Lawrence

I find that images appear only if we give our ideas uncontrolled freedom—when we are dreaming while awake. As soon as full consciousness, voluntary consciousness returns, images weaken, darken; they seem to withdraw to some unknown region.

Alfred Binet

. . . think of writing in terms of discovery, which is to say that creation must take place between the pen and paper, not before in thought or afterwards in a recasting . . . It will come if it is there and if you will let it come . . . So how can you know what it will be? What will be best in it is that you really do not know. If you knew it all it would not be a creation but dictation.

Gertrude Stein

It seemed that I had inside me, swelling and gathering all the time, a huge black cloud and that this cloud was loaded with electricity, pregnant, crested, with a kind of hurricane violence that could not be held in check much longer; that the moment was approaching fast when it would break. Well, all I can say is that the storm did break. It came in a torrent, and it is not over yet.

Thomas Wolfe

Eric Fromm asked,

What are the conditions of the creative attitude, of seeing and responding, of being aware and being sensitive to what one is aware of? First of all, it requires the capacity to be puzzled . . . But once they are through with the process of education, most people lose the capacity of wondering, of being surprised. They feel they ought to know everything, and hence that it is a sign of ignorance to be surprised or puzzled by anything.

The Claremont Reading Conference was established forty-one years ago. One of its continuing purposes is to keep some surprises and puzzles in the minds and hearts of teachers. It has never proposed to teach anything directly. The general theme, "Reading Is the Process of Making Discriminative Responses," has remained the same throughout the history of the conference. This theme is creative enough that already forty-one special themes have been selected to support

it. The 1974 theme, "Reading, Thought and Language," is among them. In selecting the theme, Dr. Spencer never intended to teach anyone *methods of teaching reading* to children. Rather, he invited interested teachers to come together for interaction, for inspiration, for personal commitment, for surprise messages from people in a vast array of professions, and for enough puzzling questions to keep alert and creative.

Dr. Malcolm Douglass and his associates who now plan and produce the annual Claremont Reading Conference can pay no greater tribute to Dr. Peter Lincoln Spencer, in this first lecture in his honor, than to join me in saying with our deepest gratitude and appreciation that through his leadership *reading for us has become creative living!*

And . . .

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Cognitive Development and Reading

David Elkind

Cognitive development and reading achievement is a very large topic and one that can hardly be covered, at least with any completeness, in a brief paper such as this one. Instead, what I would like to do is to examine two more circumscribed issues beneath the more general rubric of the title. One of these issues has to do with beginning reading and the child's conception of the letter, while the second has to do with advanced reading and the child's construction of meaning. Hopefully, the discussion of these two issues will provide some concrete examples of how knowledge about cognitive development can contribute to our understanding of reading achievement.

The Child's Concept of a Letter, and Beginning Reading

One of Piaget's most important contributions to education was his demonstration of the difference between the way in which children and adults see the world. The well known "conservation" experiments are a case in point. Most adults are amazed to discover that young children believe that changing the shape of a piece of clay will change the *amount* of the clay. Adult amazement at the child's lack of conservation suggests that most adults believe that children see the world in much the same way that they do, and that any differences are at best a matter of experience and familiarity.

Where does this assumption, that children see the world as we do, come from? In many ways, it is an adult form of egocentrism, a failure to take the child's point of view. While the child's egocentrism derives from an inability to reconstruct the point of view of another person, adult egocentrism results from inability to recall or reconstruct the course of one's own cognitive growth. Once we attain *conservation*, for example, we are no longer aware of the fact that it was even a problem or that we ever doubted the constancy of a quantity across a change in its appearance.

This phenomenon, the loss of awareness of our own part in the construction of reality, is what Piaget means by *externalization*. To illustrate this phenomenon, consider the test

for the conservation of liquid quantity. The apparatus consists of two wide low beakers and a tall narrow one. The two low beakers are filled equally high with colored liquid and the child being examined is asked to state whether the amounts in the two beakers are the same. After the child agrees that this is the case, the examiner pours the liquid from one glass into the tall beaker and asks the child if the amount in the tall beaker is the same, more or less, than that in the low container.

Reactions to this demonstration follow a predictable course. Young children (usually 4-5) say that the amount in the tall glass is more, while somewhat older children (usually 6-7) say that the amount in the low container is the same as the amount in the tall container despite the unequal levels. The child arrives at this conclusion with the aid of reason because there is no way, by merely looking at the two containers, that he could be sure that they contained equal amounts. The child arrived at the equality by reasoning from the fact that the quantities were the same before, nothing was added or removed, so they are the same now.

What is significant about this developmental progression, from the present point of view, is that once the child attains conservation he is no longer aware of his own part in the process. Although conservation is a deduction, a conclusion from reasoning, the child takes it to be a perceptual given, a piece of reality that has nothing at all to do with him. He *externalizes* the results of his own mental activities and assumes that what he has constructed exists outside of and independently of himself.

In general this process of externalization serves a useful adaptive purpose and allows the individual to operate more effectively in the environment. Externalization only becomes a problem when we try to teach the young, that is, when we try to short circuit the natural educational process. In that case we as adults, who have conceptualized and externalized many facets of the world, find it difficult to appreciate the difficulties children encounter in their attempts at making sense out of their world. Piaget's works on number, space, time and so on, have demonstrated the problems children encounter in mastering concepts which, to adults, appear self evident.

This long preamble was necessary to demonstrate what seems to me to be a basic error in much beginning reading instruction. The error centers about the concept of the letter which is, in many ways, the basic "unit" of reading. To the adult the letter appears as a discrete object which is an arbitrary representation of one or more sounds. But the "letter," as the adult knows it, is an externalized conception and it is no more "out there" than is the equality between liquids in tall and narrow containers. The letter we know and see as adults is not the letter known to the beginning reader.

From the child's point of view, the concept of the letter poses many of the same cognitive problems as attaining concepts of number, space and time. Before the age of six or seven, most children lack a true unit or number concept because they cannot coordinate two dimensions or relationships simultaneously. Such coordinations are basic to the construction of a unit concept because a unit is by definition, both like every other unit and different from it in its order of enumeration. It is generally not until about the age of six or seven, when children attain what Piaget calls concrete operations, that most children grasp that one and the same numeral has ordinal and cardinal properties. That is to say, only after the child attains concrete operations does the child grasp that any given numeral (say 6) represents both a *position* in a series *and* a class property (sixness which is shared by all groupings of six things).

In many ways the child's difficulties in grasping the concept of a letter are even more difficult than the hardships he encounters in constructing the concept of a number. Like numbers, letters have an ordinal property which is their position in the alphabet. And letters also have a cardinal property which is their name (A, B, C. etc.) and which each letter shares with all other letters of the same name (all B's are B and so on). Letters are even more complicated than numbers because, in addition to their ordinal and cardinal properties, they also have phonic contextual properties. To a certain extent this is true in the number system as well as to the extent that the position of a number will determine whether or not it is sounded. It is probably fair to say, nonetheless, that the positional rules regarding letters and sounds are probably

more complex than the positional rules in arithmetic. No one doubts that the positional rules of arithmetic involve reason and logic and I am simply arguing that the same holds true for the child's construction of phonic context rules.

Many different kinds of evidence support this logical analysis of the difficulties in early reading. Phonetic languages, such as Japanese, Hebrew, Serbo-Croatian, etc., are apparently much easier to learn to read than is English. Clearly this is not a matter of discrimination and association because in Japanese there are some 5000 characters and some fifty ideographs. Hebrew, in addition to its alphabet, also has a whole set of independent phonetic symbols. In a phonetic alphabet, the logical difficulties are removed because one and the same element always has one and the same sound regardless of its position or phonetic context. The letter in a phonetic alphabet is still a complex concept but a less complicated one than the concept of the letter in English.

In addition to this cultural evidence, we have published a body of research which also points to the logical difficulties inherent in beginning reading. We have shown that reading achievement and logical ability load on the same factor (Elkind, Horn and Schneider, 1965); that average readers are superior to slow readers, of comparable overall intelligence, in logical ability (Elkind, Larson and Van Doorninck, 1965) and that training children in logical skills has a significant positive effect upon some aspects of reading achievement (Elkind and Deblinger, 1969). All of these findings are consistent with the view that the letter is a complex logical construction that requires concrete operations for its full elaboration.

To test this hypothesis in still another way, we have begun, in the last few years, to look at the cognitive competencies of children who read early, that is, children who read before they enter kindergarten. One of our hypotheses was that if reading involves concrete operations, which are usually attained at age 6-7, then early readers should show these abilities at an early age. In addition to assessing children's cognitive abilities we were also interested in the personal social characteristics of these children and in the educational-emotional climate that prevails in their homes.

We have now completed two studies of early readers, one

with 16 (Briggs & Elkind, 1973) early readers and in another with 38 (Briggs and Elkind, 1974). In both studies the early readers were matched with non-early reading control children on such things as age, sex, IQ and socioeconomic status. All the children were given a large battery of achievement and intelligence tests as well as personality and creativity tests. In addition, their parents were interviewed. In both studies we found that early reading children were superior to non-early reading children on Piagetian measures of conservation. They were also better on certain ITPA scales such as sound blending.

It is important to emphasize, however, that cognitive construction of a letter is only one of the requirements for successful early reading. Our parent interview data suggest that a rich background of early experience with spoken and written language provided by homes where books and magazines are plentiful, where parents read and read to the children, is also important for successful reading. In addition the data on early readers also suggest that emotional attachment to an adult who is a model of reading behavior and who rewards the child's reading activities is of considerable importance in early reading. Learning to read is a dull and unrewarding task, and social motivation to please significant adults appears to be a necessary, if not a sufficient, factor in learning to read.

In talking about cognitive development and early reading, it is therefore, important to avoid the two extremes that are sometimes advocated when cognitive "readiness" is discussed. One extreme is "early intervention" in the effort to train children of preschool age in cognitive abilities they have not yet attained. I have seen no evidence that such early intervention has any lasting effectiveness. But the alternative extreme, allowing children to learn in their own time and in their own way, is also unwarranted. Children need instruction in learning to read, but only after they have demonstrated the requisite cognitive abilities.

In summary, there appears to me to be at least four requirements for successful beginning reading: a) a language rich environment; b) attachment to adults who model and reward reading behavior; c) the attainment of concrete operations; and d) an instructional program. All other things being

equal, namely, that the children in question are of at least average intellectual ability and are free of serious emotional or physical handicaps, the presence of these four characteristics should ensure that most children will learn to read with reasonable ease and considerable enjoyment.

Advanced Reading and the Construction of Meaning

It has already been suggested that the intellectual processes involved in beginning reading are analogous to those involved in concept formation. A child who is learning to read has to coordinate similarities and differences and construct concepts of letters which are both like every other letter in that they represent sounds but different in the particular sounds they stand for. Concept formation also involves inferential processes and these can be observed in beginning reading as well. Many errors in beginning reading such as reading "where" for "when" are not discrimination errors, but rather inferential errors. The child is inferring the whole from observing the part (the wh. -). Such inferential errors are high level cognitive errors inasmuch as the child is doing what more advanced and accomplished readers do. These processes should be encouraged by temporarily sacrificing accuracy for fluency. Once a child is a fluent reader he can always correct for accuracy, but the reverse is less likely to be the case.

Once the concept formation and inferential aspects of reading have become automatized, and children can recognize printed words with ease and rapidity, they enter the phase of rapid silent reading. In silent reading the major cognitive task is no longer concept formation and inference but rather, interpretation, the construction of meaning. In constructing meanings, the child has to relate representations, in this case printed words, with his own concepts and ideas. Success in interpretation, or comprehension, will depend upon a different set of characteristics than learning to read and these will be described below.

Visual Independence. Rapid silent reading and comprehension requires, at the very outset, that the visual verbal system become independent of the sensory motor system. Rapid reading involves fewer motor fixations and wider visual

segments of scanning and this in turn means less motor involvement and more conceptual inferential activity. In effect, in rapid silent reading the brain does more work and the eyes do less. We have some recent evidence that supports the importance of visual independence in advanced reading.

In one study, Elkind & Horn & Schneider (1965), we found that while tactile discrimination of sandpaper letters was positively related to reading achievement among beginning readers, it was negatively correlated with reading achievement among advanced readers. Apparently, motoric identification and discrimination of letters, as advocated by Fernald (1921) and Montessori (1964) is beneficial in the beginning phases of learning to read but the coordination of visual and motor processes have to be given up if more rapid reading is to develop. Put more concretely, it is helpful for a beginning reader to use his finger as a marker to direct attention and exploration of printed matter. But once he becomes an advanced reader, using a finger as a marker would impede his reading. Rapid reading requires a certain independence from the tactile motor system.

Some recent data (Elkind & Meyer, 1974) on perceptual exploration and memory demonstrate this growth of visual independence in another way. Children at different age levels (from age 4 through age 8) were shown large cards upon which were pasted 16 pictures of familiar objects. On one card the pictures were pasted in an upright position whereas on another the same pictures were pasted at 180° from their normal position. At each age level half of the children were shown the card with the picture upright while the other half were shown the card with the pictures at 180° to the upright. Each child had two tasks; to name each of the figures on the card and then, to recall as many of the figures as he could once the card was turned over.

Results showed that among young children (age 4-5) there was a significant difference in recall scores in favor of the figures rotated 180°. This difference, however, diminishes as children grow older and disappears at about the age of 8 or 9. A similar pattern appears to hold true for limited hearing children who use finger spelling and vocalization in communication (Elkind and LaFrance, 1974). What these data

suggest is that in young children the motoric system is still tied to the visual system. In identifying the 180° figures, these children may implicitly try to "right" the figures which produces increased motoric involvement. Our hypothesis is that the increased motoric involvement and attendant heightened attention account for the superior memory for upside down figures in young children. Among older children, in whom identification can occur without implicit motoric "righting" this attentional advantage for upside down figures is no longer present.

There is thus some direct as well as indirect evidence that rapid, silent reading involves the attainment of considerable visual independence from the tactile motor system. Apparently this occurs even among limited hearing children who use finger spelling as well as vocalization to communicate. Although many limited hearing children seldom go beyond the fourth or fifth grade reading level, this is probably more a conceptual matter than one of visual-motor dependence. Indeed, among older deaf children, the rapidity with which they finger spell and read finger spelling is very much like rapid reading. Visual independence amounts to a kind of automatization of the visual aspect of reading in which the visual scanning process is relatively independent of tactile motor input.

Meaning Construction. A second prerequisite to advanced silent reading is facility in meaning construction. From a cognitive development point of view, reading comprehension is not a passive process of decoding written symbols. On the contrary, it must be regarded as a constructive activity analogous to creative writing. Elsewhere (Elkind, Hetzel and Coe, 1974) we have described three types of learning which are: a) the construction of concepts (knowledge); b) the construction of representations (including language), and c) the construction of meanings (the coordination of knowledge and representations). The point is that meaning is not given or inherent in written or spoken words but rather has to be given meaning by the reader or listener who interprets them within his own storehouse of knowledge. The silent reader gives meaning to the words he reads by relating these to the conceptual system he has constructed in the course of his de-

velopment. The richness of meaning that he derives from his reading will depend both upon the quality of the material he is reading and upon the breadth and depth of his conceptual understanding. Satisfaction in reading often derives, in part at least, from the degree of fit between the material being read and the conceptual level of the subject who is reading it.

A recent doctoral dissertation (Schlager, 1974) supports this position. In her dissertation Dr. Schlager chose 33 books that had won Newberry awards for excellence. She then went to a number of libraries and determined how frequently each of the books had been checked out over the preceding three year period. On the basis of these data she was able to select the five most frequently chosen books and the five least frequently chosen books from her original list. Dr. Schlager then analyzed the books from the standpoint of their congruence with the conceptual systems of the age group for which they were written. She found that the five most frequently chosen books were congruent with the cognitive level of the children for whom they were written while this was not true for the five least chosen books. Apparently, other things being equal, children prefer stories which can be given meaning within their own cognitive organization at the time.

It should be said, too, that comprehension, or the construction of meanings, is also helped by the child's own efforts at giving meaning to (i.e. representing) his own experiences. The more opportunity children have to experience the effort and satisfaction of representing their own thoughts verbally and otherwise, the better prepared they will be for interpreting the representations of others. In contemporary education, teachers often seem reluctant to have children write creatively or otherwise. But I am very much of the opinion that the more children write, the more they will get from their reading. At all levels of reading proficiency, writing and reading are reciprocal processes of meaning construction which mutually reinforce and benefit one another.

Receptive Discipline. A third prerequisite to effective silent reading seems, at first statement, to be a contradiction to what has just been said about the reader being an active participant in the process. Effective reading comprehension would seem also to require a receptive attitude, a willingness

to respond to the representations of others. Good readers, like good listeners, have to be simultaneously passive (being receptive to the representations of others) and active (interpreting those representations within their own conceptual framework).

Many young people are poor readers for the same reason that they are poor listeners, they are more interested in representing their own thoughts and ideas than they are in interpreting the thoughts and ideas of others. They lack what might be called *receptive discipline*. A young person demonstrates receptive discipline when he attends fully to the representations of others and resists following his own free associations and tangents. Many so called "slow readers" have problems with receptive discipline and not with rapid reading.

Receptive discipline is not innate and can be facilitated and taught. Text material that is of interest to the reader and at his level of competence facilitates a receptive attitude. Another way to encourage receptive discipline is to have goals for non-recreational reading. When a young person, or an adult for that matter, knows that he will have to re-present what he has read to a group, he is likely to be more attentive than if this were not a requirement. These are but a few examples of techniques that might be employed to encourage receptive discipline. Whatever techniques used to instill it, the attainment of receptive discipline would seem to be an important ingredient for successful reading comprehension.

SUMMARY

In this paper I have tried to outline what cognitive developmental theory and research would seem to suggest as some of the prerequisites for beginning and rapid reading. As far as beginning reading is concerned, there is evidence to believe that concrete operations, a language rich environment, attachment to adults who model and reward reading behavior, and appropriate instruction, are all involved in successful beginning reading. With respect to advanced reading, there is evidence to suggest that visual independence, meaning construction and receptive discipline are all involved in rapid silent reading and successful comprehension. While we are still far from having a complete understanding of beginning

or advanced reading, analysis of the cognitive aspects of this process promises to add significantly to our understanding of reading achievement.

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Attitudes toward Language—What Value for the Classroom Reading Teacher?

Robert B. Ruddell

It is a pleasure to again return to the Claremont Reading Conference. Each time I have participated in this Conference I have discovered highly enthusiastic teachers who are searching first for ideas to enhance their own academic background and second, for ideas which can be utilized directly in their own classrooms—both of course leading to the development of a more effective instructional program for their children. And, I feel certain that you have similar objectives.

During the next few minutes I would like to examine the relationship between our attitudes and our instructional program in reading. This relationship can best be explored by pursuing three major issues. The first issue relates to our attitude toward our own language and the language of the children in our classrooms. The second deals with our attitude toward language change. And the third concerns our attitude toward language through literature. As each issue is developed we must search for logical implications directly related to our own classroom settings. Other implications will be formulated in the same way that Andrew Wyeth, one of America's great contemporary painters, reports that he approaches a painting. He says,

> Every so often I'll catch, out of the corner of my eye, off-balance, a flash impression of something—a spark of excitement. If it holds in my memory, maybe weeks or even years later, very suddenly—maybe even walking down a street in New York City—that thing will dawn on me, just like that. Then the idea enriches in my mind and I embellish it maybe for weeks. . . (1)

The term, attitude, of course, is critical to our discussion as we deal with our own language, that of the child, language change, and language through literature. Klausmeier has defined attitudes as "those learned, emotionally-toned predispositions which cause us to react in certain ways toward persons, objects, and ideas"(2). In the case of language attitudes, it is important that we search into our past to ask, "What factors

may influence the particular view we hold toward a certain dialect, toward certain words, toward certain groups of people and toward literature?" We may further ask, "Has there been opportunity to be exposed to the broad range of characteristics of dialects, words, people, and literature experiences?" This will require in a sense that we become as objective as possible in our search to examine the sources of the various attitudes that we may hold about language.

Now, at the time of the early English settlements in this country, there was considerable variation in the language used in England which resulted in dialectal differences in the colonies along the eastern seaboard in what is now Massachusetts, Virginia, Maryland, and Rhode Island. Later, because of geographical separation such as the Appalachian Mountain chain, and poor transportation, there was limited language interchange between the colonies, and various dialectal forms were perpetuated. These still exist today despite the effects of rapid forms of transportation and communication and the existence of a highly mobile population in this country. Within these varieties of English, various social varieties were found. The standard English forms were those which were viewed as having accepted status by the majority of the population, and this standard form was in turn imposed upon other varieties of English, largely because of the social and political position of the people who used the dialect. The non-standard English forms consist presently of varieties of English that deviate from the standard forms.

Over the years, each and every one of us has developed a certain attitude toward various English forms. It is quite common that the standard form has received high priority in our own backgrounds, owing to parental and teacher emphasis placed upon "good English" and in turn social mobility. The net effect of this was to dichotomize the English language into good and bad versions. The resulting stereotype has often produced attitudes toward self as a competent or incompetent speaker. The individuals who suffer greatest from such language stereotyping are those who use non-standard or variant dialects. Due to the limited information available in past years, the general public often regards non-standard dialects as poor or sloppy English and has come to use such dialects as

class markers for uneducated persons of low social status. William Labov, a socio-linguist, has pointed out, based on his research, that an individual who uses non-standard speech forms twenty to thirty percent of the time will be perceived as using these forms all of the time(3). As a result, the variant dialect patterns used in the northern urban areas and on the West Coast by Blacks who have recently migrated from the South, and by Appalachian Whites, serve as speech stereotypes. A similar stereotype problem exists for many Chicano and Puerto Rican youngsters from Spanish-speaking homes. A direct implication, of course, is to suggest that when we observe a child who does not use the final consonant in the dialect, so that the words *past* and *pass* are both pronounced as *pass* and the words *mend* and *men* are both pronounced as *men*, and the child who says, "The cat be walking on the table" instead of "The cat is walking on the table," and "Every day the boy be pulling a wagon," instead of "Every day the boy is pulling a wagon," that we understand the child is using a highly consistent and regular form of his own language. For many of us, we must reopen the closed case of non-standard dialect because of the information of comparatively recent times.

Goodman, who has worked extensively in the miscue analysis of children's reading, concludes that the dialect of the non-standard speaker, particularly the Black child, does not interfere with the reading process or the construction of meaning for the child since this results from the reader's own language(4). The main problem, as Goodman sees it, is that of the teacher, who rejects or corrects a dialect-based miscue, and in turn moves the reader away from his own linguistic competence. He states that word for word accuracy in a very narrow sense often becomes the goal of reading instruction rather than the meaning contained in the reading passage itself. Goodman states flatly that dialect rejection and not dialect differences is the problem that reading educators must overcome to remove the school-imposed disadvantage for the non-standard speaker. This conclusion would seem to be supported in part by the research of Kenneth Johnson and Herbert Simons at the University of California at Berkeley(5). My own research(6) along this line would suggest a similar

conclusion, with the limitation that homophones for the non-standard speaker, e.g., the word *tent* is pronounced as *ten*, be placed in a meaningful context which is sufficient to enable the non-standard speaker to grasp the meaning intended.

The most important implication from this discussion is that of assuming the responsibility as classroom teachers to develop our own and our student's appreciation of non-standard dialects as we come to understand the highly regular and consistent nature of these language forms. For those of you who are interested in obtaining a more detailed understanding of non-standard and second language forms (Black English variations, language deviations of Chicano and Chinese youngsters) I would recommend Chapter Nine of a text entitled *Reading-Language Instruction:Innovative Practices* (7). The chapter details particular language differences across the dialects and identifies specific instructional activities appropriate for use in the classroom.

Now let us turn to our second issue—our attitude toward language change. Just as we may have developed a belief that standard English dialect is the only appropriate form, many of us have developed the viewpoint that indeed the English language is changing so rapidly that it is deteriorating. This may be a result of a general fear of change, or it may stem directly from the constant rationale presented to many of us from childhood that only one form of English is appropriate for our time. I think this is reflected in a rather dramatic way in the following lyrics for those over thirty.

LYRICS FOR THOSE OVER THIRTY

Remember when hippie meant big in the hips
And a trip involved travel in cars, planes and ships?
When pot was a vessel for cooking things in
And hooked is what grandmother's rugs might have been?
When fix was a verb meaning mend or repair
And be-in meant simply existing somewhere?
When neat meant well-organized, tidy and clean
And grass was a ground cover, usually green?
When lights and not people were turned on and off
And the pill was intended to help cure a cough?
When groovy meant furrowed, with channels and hollows

And birds were winged creatures like robins and swallows?
When a roll was a bun and a rock was a stone
And hung-up was something you did to the phone?
When chicken meant poultry and bag was a sack
And junk was just cast offs and old bric-a-brac?
When cat was a feline, a kitten grown up
And tea was a liquid you drank from a cup?
When swinger was someone who swung in a swing
And pad was a sort of a cushiony thing?
When way-out meant distant and far, far away
And a man couldn't sue you for calling him "gay"?
Words once so sensible, sober and serious
Are making the scene, man, like psychodelerious.
It's groovy, dad, groovy—but English it's not.
Me thinks that the language is going to pot.

Anonymous

Whether we like it or not, our language is constantly changing. And I think it is extremely important that we develop the concept of language change in our classrooms.

We are aware, for example, that English changes in several areas. The first is with the sound system or the phonology of the language. The second is with word formation or morphology in the linguist's terminology. The third is a grammatical variation or syntax while the fourth is that of meaning or semantics.

The sound system of English has changed over several centuries. Had you lived in the Old English period, for example, the word *ether* and *either* would both have sounded like *ether* because the voiceless sound in *ether* and the voiced sound in *either* were not separate sounds. By the time of Middle English, however, these two sounds had separated and were different phonemes and so distinguished the words *ether* and *either*. Another example of sound change is that of the phoneme or sound being added to a word. The early Modern English word, *vermin* later became *varmint*. Sometimes a sound is lost as is the case with the Modern English word, *knight*, in which the initial sound represented by the letter *k* was eliminated in Middle English. The process accounts for a number of spelling irregularities in our language although

from the standpoint of the writing system, the *k* serves an important function by visually discriminating *knight* from *night*.

Language also changes in word formation or morphology. We can form new words from the internal elements of our language. For example, an affix can be added to change the function or meaning of a word in the sentence as is the case with *wall-type telephone* where *type* is added. The extraction of the verb *enthuse* from the noun *enthusiasm* illustrates a type of change the linguist calls back formation, where a word is formed from, but looks as if it is the base of another word. Another example is the formation of *pea* from *peas* which was a singular form in Old English. Occasionally, a slight pause or break between words is misinterpreted and results in a different word. For example, *an eut* became *a newt* which is a small salamander while *a nadder* became *an adder*, both instances resulting in a misinterpretation due to the pause, break, or the juncture between words. Repetitive formation also illustrates the formation of other types of words. We have, for example, *walkie-talkie* and *boogie-woogie*. We have new words which are formed by blending existing parts such as *brunch*, *smog* and *motel*. We can also derive vocabulary through various types of borrowings. For example, the word *astronaut* which is derived from Greek literally means star-sailor (astro plus naut). We also deal with borrowed words and shift their use to fit a new concept. The Germanic words, *God*, *heaven*, and *hell*, for example, were adjusted to Christian concepts. And occasionally, a foreign word is translated literally. Our word *gospel* descended from Old English *godspell*, meaning good news which was literally translated from Greek *evangeline* (8).

One of the distinct characteristics of English is that of assimilation of borrowed words, and these are used in the formation of other words. For example, the Latin word *discus* has been borrowed into English four times. It was first borrowed directly into Old English, producing the word *dish*. It was borrowed directly into Middle English, producing the word *disc* and through French into Middle English, producing the word *dais* (a slightly raised platform at one end of the classroom or banquet hall). And finally, it was borrowed di-

rectly into Modern English, producing the athletic term *discus*.

In the classroom setting, we can develop interesting language discussions by considering the reasoning behind trade names and commercial products. For example, consider the names *Mustang* and *Maverick* and the terms *Vel, Brillo* and *Fab* as well as *Joy*. To what extent are the automobile names related to a positive image projected by a particular animal? And what relationship might exist between the soap products and the words, *velvet, brilliant, fabulous* and *joyful?* We can also see the use of metaphorical extension as we deal with scientific terminology such as *sound-wave*, and *radiation-belt* and in slang forms like *LSD trip*. From this type of discussion, we can realize and appreciate the power of language as used in advertising.

Now syntax is a third area of change that can be considered. We have changes in word order. For example, in its present form there are only a few verbs in our language, such as *can, may*, and *will* that can precede the word *not*. We say, "Bill can not go" or "Bill will not go," but we consider forms like "Bill likes not steak" ungrammatical. However, this was not the case in the earlier history of the English language. We also note the changes in auxilliary verb forms that have occurred. In Old English, it was quite acceptable to say, "He wæs cumen" literally translated "He has come," but in Middle English the form could only be used with certain verbs of movement as in "He has gone." By the eighteenth century, the construction had almost entirely disappeared except in frozen forms such as "He has risen."

At the intermediate grades, we can see ways in which the use of children's literature can be helpful in studying the language. A good example of this is in De Angeli's *The Door in the Wall*, where we have examples of older language forms that are cast in a story context using dialogue.

The fourth type of change is that of semantics. We need to assist children in understanding that words are not permanently bound to their meanings, that ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and events in our culture produce semantic change. The real meaning of a word is certainly that which the speaker means at a particular time, not its original meaning. Obviously, a

dictionary at this point is authoritative only to the extent that it records and reflects meanings in the culture. The "Lyrics for Those Over Thirty" that I presented to you a few moments ago can illustrate this in a dramatic way. The meaning for words like *bird* and *bread—pot* and *pad*—for example, have shifted substantially during recent years.

Types of semantic changes should be carefully considered. Words can become narrower or more general in meaning. For example, the word *meat*, meant *food* in Old English, and is now used with the narrow meaning of *edible flesh*. Middle English *bridda*, which meant young bird, has now become *bird* with no specification for age, or a beautiful young lady. A word can take on a stronger meaning as exemplified by the Germanic version of the word *kill*, which originally meant *to torment*.

Children enjoy the study of slang, and this mode of language study offers the opportunity to examine change directly because of the rapid meaning shifts which occur. For example, words like *fuzz, chicken, groovy*, and *neat* have gone through a metamorphosis within recent years and have decreased in use. We find new versions of words entering the langue such as *axe* for the jazz singer's guitar, "blest out"—meaning high psychological state of the Jesus freaks, *downer* and *upper* indicating state of psychological being, and a whole range of labels for the pills that produce these states such as *reds* and *yellowjackets*.

Our discussion of language change and our attitude toward this change has direct implication for the classroom setting. Specifically, this relates to vocabulary development and expansion of concepts. By developing an openness toward language change and by developing an understanding of language change, we can serve to greatly enhance the concepts which our youngsters use in their daily lives and relate these directly to the classroom. In addition, we are able to develop the importance of labels representing concepts and helping children understand how labels can often result in meaning confusions because of the language change which is ever present—a part of the generation gap is a language gap.

And now to the last of our three issues, that is attitude toward language through literature. Literature experiences in

the classroom make provision for cognitive dimensions such as insight into our behavior, an awareness of people, events, and ideas which are not present in our own lifespace, and an awareness of our role as an integral part of a changing world. The literature dimension can also make an important contribution to affective goals in our instructional program. These certainly include the joy of language by entertaining, stimulating, and lulling with a persuasive combination of words and an appreciation of beauty by isolating, magnifying, or contrasting pieces of life for an esthetic observation. As teachers, we must examine our own concept of what literature is and the way in which literature is represented through language.

Poetry represents an important vehicle by which we can develop a positive attitude toward language. Poetry is not confined to grammatical conventions such as a complete sentence or the logical development of ideas or summaries. Poetry allows ideas just to be. Thoughts, images, and feelings can be presented just as elaborately, briefly, simply, or abstractly as desired. Through content, imagery, and rhythm, poetry can satisfy a wide range of tastes.

In content, poetry can reach out to all interests and ages. Young children enjoy humor and animal adventures, but perhaps their most vital interest is simply "me," since establishing positive self-concepts of themselves as individuals and as members of their present group is of utmost importance to them. A poem like John Ciardi's, "And Off He Went Just As Proud As You Please," about the preference for one's own name is very meaningful to the young child(9). Dorothy Aldis' "Everybody Says" suggests another way a child can look at himself or herself as an individual—as Mother, Father, Aunt Bee or just me(10). Poetry can also be used to develop certain content related to particular concepts and ideas being studied in the classroom. For example, in the study of the rodent family, elementary children of all ages have been delighted by Rose Fileman's "Mice"(11). On the same topic we find Lucy Sprague Mitchell's "The House of the Mouse," which represents quite a different style(12).

Imagery is a second gift of poetry. Although prose can certainly create imagery for the reader, poetry can sometimes do it more powerfully because of its condensation. A classic

example is Carl Sandburg's "Fog"(13). Children's imaginations can also be easily aroused with the images created in Mary O'Neill's *Hailstones and Halibut Bones*. One example of the many colors she paints for the reader is found in "What Is Brown?"(14). While young children enjoy the topic of color, Mary O'Neill's poetry is especially rich for older children, who can find great depth in such descriptive phrases.

Rhythm also plays an important role in poetry's contribution to children. All ages enjoy and respond to a pulsating beat. Very young children, because of the topic, enjoy the rhythm of "Happiness," by A. A. Milne(15).

In "Disobedience," the child exerts a certain amount of control over Mother(16). Again, the rhythm is very satisfying.

The development of nonsense humor through the limerick can also be enjoyable and develop positive feelings toward language through humor. The development of the five lines—the first, second, and fifth lines rhyming—and the third line rhyming with the fourth, is illustrated by Edward Lear in "There Was an Old Man of Dumbree"(17). Certainly limericks have worn well in the classroom because they lead to the world of nonsense and fantasy and because children like to try their own versions. The rhythmic pattern is easy to establish, and the rhyme is apparent even to the eye.

The positive attitude which we develop toward language through literature can serve to enhance the reading program in many ways. The child can use literature to open doors commensurate with his or her interest, maturity, and pace.

Every literature selection can expand vocabulary at some level of language development, even through picture books. Some selections offer models of descriptive language while others contain vocabulary of a specialized type. *Wingfin and Topple* by Evans G. Valens, Jr., illustrates descriptive language extremely well. The finger-painted illustrations in this selection reinforce the imagery of selections like:

> 'They made your fins too long,' they said. Indeed they were. Twelve times as long as ordinary fins; when Topple spread them, they caught hold like anchors, tripped him, rolled him belly-up(18).

A focus on description itself exists in "The Blind Men

and the Elephant" by Lillian Quigley. Such a story enables the reader or listeners to begin to appreciate that a particular description stems from a particular point of view.

Books in specialized areas can be found for just about any subject. The Walter Farley books develop terminology related to horses. Other subjects of interest might be science fiction, medicine, or baseball. Biographies are frequently used for acquainting readers with specialized fields. Poetry, of course, provides a universe of descriptive vocabulary ranging from the "fog on little cat feet" to very abstract imagery for the older reader.

Models of syntactical patterns can also be provided through the literature the child is currently encountering. A number of approaches are available here. For example, the children may rearrange and condense the sentence in various ways. Older children's writing will resemble the following sentence adapted from Robert McClosky's *Homer Price:* "A lady and a chauffeur, in a large shiny black car, stopped in front of the lunch room and the chauffeur helped the lady out of the rear door."; and then contrasted with the original: "Just then a large shiny black car, stopped in front of the lunch room, and a chauffeur helped a lady out of the rear door." How do the sentences differ? Which do you like best? Why?

There are several ways to vary a sentence by expansion. One obvious method is modification. By answering the how, what, where kinds of questions, children can expand a statement like "He could see the peach" to a version more like Ronald Dahl's from *James and the Giant Peach*—"Not far away, in the middle of the garden, he could see the giant peach, towering over everything else."

These methods of varying syntactic patterns must be adapted, of course, to fit the particular language maturity level of the children involved. The important point is that in addition to classroom models of speech and written language, literature provides ready-made models for language development. The children can examine the alternatives that were available to an author to convey a particular idea, examine the choice made, and explore the reasons for that choice. Perhaps they will agree that it was the most effective choice;

perhaps they will not. But this kind of evaluation is one way learning takes place. In other instances, students might follow the reverse process, that is they might examine literature for illustrations of certain principles of language. At any rate, the world of literature offers a panoramic mirror of the language of the society, and so its potential approaches that of language itself.

The literature experience can thus provide opportunity for the development of positive attitudes toward language as children come to know the joy of language and appreciation of beauty. As Albert Grande has emphasized, "Literature as an expression of human strife, conflict, feelings, and ideas must engage the student's active response, evoking his fund of intellectual and emotional experience"(19).

To summarize, then, I hope my comments here today have been of value in causing you to re-examine your attitude toward your own language, and toward the language of the youngsters in your classroom, specifically as related to your instructional goals in reading. Further, I would hope that your attitude change has been prodded and poked a bit, leading to a greater degree of openness toward this miraculous phenomenon which serves as our basic vehicle of communication. And finally, I would hope that I have been helpful in illuminating some specific ideas in developing positive attitudes toward language through literature.

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Behavioral Objectives and Reading Instruction

Herbert D. Simons

Introduction

One of the most pervasive trends in education today is the ever-growing use of behavioral objectives. The proponents of behavioral objectives are particularly drawn to the teaching of reading. They see this area as ideal for the application of behavioral objectives. They cite reading as an area where there has been a great deal of research, perhaps more than any other curriculum area, and therefore they believe, first, that the teaching of reading is well-defined and understood. They are quite mistaken. In fact, one could argue that despite the voluminous research we know very little in any scientific way about the reading process and about teaching reading. Second, they believe that reading is a relatively simple, well-delineated skill or groups of skills as opposed to the more complex higher level skills. And third, there is a tradition of conceiving the teaching of reading in terms of a series of separate and well-defined skills which lend themselves neatly to the small units of behavior and precise definitions that are required for the effective application of behavioral objectives. Since the advocates of behavioral objectives feel that reading instruction is well-suited to the application of behavioral objectives, one can then use this area as a test case for the effectiveness of behavioral objectives. If they fail here where the conditions are favorable, how will they fare under less favorable conditions?

I will argue the case in this paper that behavioral objectives as they apply to reading will fail to lead to the improvement of reading instruction and consequently will be of no use in other curricula areas. My argument will be in two parts. First I will attempt to demonstrate that behavioral objectives as they apply to reading are in fact no better than the current approaches to reading instruction. And second I will argue that the effects of applying behavioral objectives to reading

may be negative and actually interfere with the improvement of instruction.

However, in making the case against behavioral objectives I hope that my criticisms will not be taken as an excuse for maintaining the status quo. We are not doing an adequate job of teaching reading in this country, particularly for our minority groups. We must find more effective ways to teach reading. Behavioral objectives are simply not, in my opinion, going to lead to more effective instruction.

Behavioral Objectives and the Knowledge-Behavior Relationship

One of the major flaws of behavioral objectives is their failure to take cognizance of the relationship between knowledge and behavior. By ignoring this relationship behavioral objectives have very little chance of improving reading instruction. The problem arises because there is a complex and not very well understood relationship between knowledge and behavior. Therefore it is not very easy to determine what some one knows by observing behavior alone as behavioral objectives require. The relationship between knowledge and behavior is complex. There is often a large set of specific behaviors that may be associated with any given piece of knowledge in different ways, consequently some behaviors may be better and closer reflections of knowledge than others. In addition, behaviors may be influenced by factors other than knowledge, such as beliefs, attitudes, motivations, the testing situation and the like. Thus any single given behavior may or may not be an accurate indicator of whether in fact a specific piece of knowledge is possessed by an individual. In order to choose the most appropriate behavior as a reflection of knowledge, it is necessary to have a description of the precise ways a given behavior is related to this knowledge as well as the other factors that influence the behavior. Needless to say, the science of psychology has not progressed very far in providing this type of information.

By concentrating on behavior alone without considering its relationship to knowledge, behavioral objectives simply ignore the problems discussed above. To write a behavioral objective, one simply and arbitrarily chooses a specific be-

havior, the conditions under which it is to be produced and the criteria of successful performance. No attention is paid to important questions such as:

1. Is this behavior the most appropriate and direct behavioral reflection of knowledge?

2. Is this behavior influenced by other factors?

3. How important are these other factors?

4. What other functionally equivalent behaviors could be accepted as demonstrating the possession of knowledge?

5. Is this behavior part of a hierarchy of related behaviors some of which may be more complex than others?

The types of problems that arise can be seen in the following examples taken from a set of objectives(1). This set contains 38 word attack skills objectives. Objective Number 4 is "matched beginning sounds to written consonant blends." The child is given a printed blend such as "pl" and is required to choose the one picture from a set of three pictures whose name contains this blend. Objective Number 20 is "Identify words containing beginning consonant blends." Here the student hears a word, e.g., "spinster" and chooses a printed word, i.e., "spell" from among three words that contain blends. Now these are two separate and presumably unrelated objectives and there is no mention of the fact that they are measures of the same skill, i.e., knowledge of consonant blends. By treating them as two unrelated objectives in a sense the skill itself disappears. What if he passes one but not the other? Does he need training in blends? Why do we need two measures of the same skill? In this set of objectives other skills do not have two measures. Why is it necessary for blends to have two measures? Is one measure a better indicator of knowledge than the other? What factors other than knowledge of blends influence performance on these objectives? Is there a better way of indicating whether a child knows the consonant blends? It is hard to see how a procedure that ignores these questions can lead to the improvement of instruction. I have discussed in more detail elsewhere the inherent problems that arise from arbitrarily choosing behaviors without being concerned with the knowledge-behavior relationship.(2)

Important Issues in Reading Instruction Ignored

If one is interested in improving reading instruction, there are at least two important questions that must be addressed. First it is necessary to know what should be taught, i.e., which skills. Second we must know the best ways to teach these skills. The list of specific questions concerning the content and the way this content should be presented is potentially very large and one would expect any attempt to improve instruction to have something to say about these questions. Behavioral objectives have very little to say about these questions.

As far as the question of what to teach is concerned the procedure employed is to ask reading teachers or reading experts what they think are the most important skills are and then to put these skills in the form of behavioral objectives. The result is that behavioral objectives curricula in reading often contain the same sets of skills that can be found in any textbook on the teaching of reading. The validity of any given skill or set of skills is never raised.

This procedure makes what is clearly the unwarranted assumption that we know what skills are necessary to learn to read. The fact of the matter is we do not. It is possible to learn to read without knowing the letter names, or how to blend or the rules of phonics, etc. Most of the research on specific skills is mixed, at best. There is even the question of whether a skill model itself is the appropriate way to look at learning to read since it is a quite artificial way of looking at the reading process.

We simply do not know in any scientific way what skills are necessary to teach in reading instruction and any proposed innovation that doesn't attempt to help us validate some of these skills can hardly be expected to be of much help in improving the teaching of reading. Behavioral objectives just serve to pass on our collective ignorance in a different form.

As to the second question of how to teach these skills, behavioral objectives are neutral on the question. Any method the teacher chooses will do as long as the objectives are attained. Here again there are unwarranted assumptions. It is assumed that either teachers already know the best ways to

teach reading skills or that it does not matter which teaching procedures are employed. There is little evidence to support either of these assumptions.

By failing to address the two important questions of what to teach and how to teach it, behavioral objectives almost guarantee their irrelevance to the improvement of reading instruction.

If we already knew the answers to these questions, we would have no need for behavioral objectives or for that matter for any other innovation and there would be no reading problem. The fact that we have a reading problem is evidence that we do not know the answers to these questions. Since behavioral objectives fail to address these questions, they are simply irrelevant to the improvement of reading instruction.

The Negative Effect of Behavioral Objectives

If behavioral objectives were only irrelevant, they could be safely ignored since their implementation would be innocuous. Unfortunately, there is reason to believe that the effects of implementing them may have a negative effect on efforts to improve reading instruction.

First there is the tendency in the application of behavioral objectives to reading to emphasize the simple, easily measured aspects of reading at the expense of more complex and less easily measured but equally important ones such as motivation, attitude, appreciation, critical thinking, etc. Thus these factors tend to be neglected.

Second, by the requirement that outcomes be specified in minute detail in advance, the use of behavioral objectives will in all likelihood encourage the more traditional and conservative approaches to teaching reading. Creative teachers who want to explore methods and procedures that may have outcomes that cannot be completely specified in advance and may or may not lead to the specific outcomes that the behavioral objectives curricula require will be more reluctant to explore these alternatives. Trying something new and unusual will become dangerous when one's job may depend upon students' performance on a narrow set of objectives. My guess is that the few creative teachers that we have will become discouraged and either leave the profession or turn to conventional

methods. The less creative majority of teachers will follow the safest course and simply teach to the behavioral objective by mimicking the objective. If this happens, behavioral objectives will end up having a constraining and conservative influence on teaching reading. The open classroom and other movements in education that encourage diversity and involve less control and manipulation of students will have a more difficult time becoming viable alternatives. The more dogmatic aspects of education will be, I am afraid, encouraged by behavioral objectives.

Another negative effect is the complacency that is engendered by the belief that behavioral objectives are scientific and therefore cannot be questioned by non-scientists such as teachers. The attitude that if it is scientific it must be right may reduce teachers' willingness and desire to evaluate and criticize the effectiveness of behavioral objectives. Proponents of behavioral objectives hold that the issues raised in this discussion must be left to the scientific experts who somehow understand reality better than the classroom teacher. This may have a stifling effect on criticism and discussion among educators who are not scientists. The fact of the matter is that behavioral objectives are not very scientific at all and are based on a mistaken idea that science is simply precise measurements and operational definitions. Behavioral objectives simply mimic the surface features of science without containing any of its real content.

A final negative effect may be that all the attention and effort that teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers spend on developing, discussing and implementing behavioral objectives will distract us from the more important questions discussed above which must be addressed if the reading achievement of our students is to be improved. The more time and effort we spend mindlessly producing and using behavioral objectives the less time and energy we will have to spend on the improvement of reading instruction. Let us not waste our time on enterprises such as behavioral objectives that, in my opinion, have so little merit.

In closing it should be pointed out that the proponents of behavioral objectives do not consciously encourage these negative effects. They would claim that they are not responsible if

educators misinterpret and misuse behavioral objectives. In reply to this last claim, I suggest that the developers of behavioral objectives are responsible as are all persons for the foreseeable consequences of their actions. Thus they must, I believe, accept some of the blame if the negative effects of behavioral objectives that I have outlined here come to pass.

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Reading, Thought and Language in the British Infant School

Lil Thompson

The Plowden Report declared that "Spoken language plays a central role in learning" and that "language is central to the whole process of education". To those who criticise teachers today for the illiteracy which is supposed to be prevalent, I commend these statements. To me, an infant teacher, it seems logical that if language in the early years is neglected, there is no real foundation upon which to build. If I want children to read and write, they must have "words"—and these come in the early years from the home environment. This has been emphasised in the last two decades by researchers who have stressed the fact that children who come from literate homes have an advantage over those from homes where the parents do not read, write, talk to each other, or to their offspring.

We know, because we have been told so many times, that experience is interpreted, recorded and extended. Language is essential to the development of the child. It is a behaviour which begins when a child utters its first cry; it is a skill to be learned, and in our world, and especially that of the child, the chief means of communication. The language used in these very important early years is spoken language. The child who comes from a home where there is language is surrounded from birth by the very sounds it will use for the rest of its life. Where there is little or no language, the child will grow up deprived, and the teacher will have very poor material with which to build. Andrew Wilkinson in his book, *The Foundations of Language* says, "Crucial in their development seems to be the nature of the dialogue the child conducts with adults, usually the mother." He goes on to say, however, that "Mere exposure to language is not enough and that in the good family a great deal of covert teaching goes on in a compulsory situation which prepares the child for future learning".

I am concerned about children in 1974 who are surrounded by more sounds than ever before. There is radio, the record

player and television blaring out in many homes for the greater part of every day. It is because of these that I am concerned. "Mere exposure" is not enough! Indeed, it can prove too much for most of our children who, I find, are entering school at five years of age "conditioned not to listen". So many sounds have hit their ears that at a very early age they have developed the power of "switching-off". One has only to observe a group of children listening to a story to see this in process. If you watch their eyes, the "shutters" come down, leaving them in a world of their own. One of our greatest tasks these days is getting small children to listen. Until children can do this effectively, writing and reading skills are going to be hard labour for the teacher.

So modern media give rise for concern—concern that so many children are stuck in front of a television set which is used as a dummy and can be as stultifying when it comes to language development. Gone are the days when parents had time to say nursery rhymes and tell a story at bedtime. Very few children come to school today with the wealth of words that can be learned from knowing nursery rhymes!

So, because of the so-called advantages in the home environment—the child can enter school linguistically deprived. Where do we begin? Do we talk to the child? Is our language acceptable to the child? Does he understand what we say to him? We must remember that there are many language patterns and ours as teachers is not necessarily that of the home. Unless we are careful we can confuse the child. Our accent may not be the same; our vocabulary may be broader, and it may take us a lot longer to say what the mother can communicate with a look. We must make sure that we are on the same wave length as the child by finding out as much as possible about his home background. Pre-school visits are essential with the mother or father sitting in alongside the child for story and other language experience. During these visits, too, the teacher will attempt to impress upon the parent the need for more talk and stories. This should surely dispel the threat "You won't be able to talk when you go to school!"

Verbalism of what a child has done, or sees, or feels, is the basis on which every kind of experience can be discussed, ordered and rendered serviceable. Too often today there are

children who "see without thinking", "do without talking" and "hear without listening". As teachers we must be aware of this so that we can help them.

"On a child's verbal facility, gained early in life, depends much of his future development", stated The Times. "Early in life" to me means those very precious five years before he starts school—those wonderful years when he is, as Montessorri put it "Sensitive to language". Those wonderful years when language is acquired, structure laid down, and vocabulary grows at such a rate that we can but marvel.

I find it impossible to separate the language skills of listening, talking, reading and writing, but when I talk about the ways and means of getting children to read and write, I do know there must be a foundation of words. Without these, not only is the child deprived, but the teacher handicapped.

Where do we get these words? So much has been said and written about the right school environment. This must be exciting. Children entering school are at the wonderful stage of what? when? who? what for? If the classroom is full of exciting things to look at, touch, smell, taste, etc., the child will be stimulated and talk will flow. The teacher must be everywhere at the right moment. The classroom should be a sea of discovery, and the child must be piloted around it. "Atmosphere" is all important, and this is created by the relationship between the child and teacher. The school has to compensate for the poverty of the home environment, and this poverty has nothing to do with socio-economic conditions. The teacher must be aware of this deprivation and gear himself to it.

Into this environment with its atmosphere, the skills of reading and writing have to be introduced. For many, reading is the most important "R". Perhaps it is this very awareness that leads many of us into making mistakes in the early stages. I am convinced that for many parents, "school" means the three "R's", and I am sure many promise their children the magical gifts of all three when they start school. Those of us who have spent a lifetime with small children, realise I hope, how easy it is to destroy the desire to learn to read. The teacher herself has pressure put upon her from all sides. Anxious parents measure their child against other children.

The teacher herself realizes that her colleagues will expect such and such a standard. So the pressure increases, the "pushing" begins, if only sub-consciously. Perhaps this is where we fail right at the beginning by passing on this feeling of anxiety. Sir Alec Clegg, writing in The Times Educational Supplement on "The hysteria over reading" says,

> "Reading is vitally important, and it would be the utmost folly not to make improvements in its teaching, which are consistent with the pleasure which ought to be derived from it. But we should take care lest what we now do with mental development is what we tended to do in the twenties with physical development. When we gave physical exercises to under-nourished children in the hope of adding to their strength. I hope that our infant teachers who so often provide examples of what good education means, will, if they are faced with panic measures, remember the statement written by Her Majesty's Inspectors over one hundred and twenty-five years ago; 'The singular slowness with which the children of our National Schools learn to read (a factor to which all our reports have born testimony) is, in some degree, to be attributed to the unwise concentration of the labours of the school on that single subject' ".

Reading is important, but it is only part of the whole education of the child. The teacher must look closely at the child. Is he able to listen to a story? Is he able to clothe his thoughts with words and contribute an item of news in an oral lesson? There are so many questions we must ask ourselves about the child before we can begin to introduce him to reading printed words. Time spent at this very early stage is never wasted.

As we question ourselves about the child we must remember that he, too, is at the same 'question asking stage'. "Why do I have to read? Mummy reads to me". So many of the early infant activities are instinctive. Children develop physically and mentally through play, and it is through this that they come to terms with this new environment which we call school. Learning to read does not come naturally like learning to talk. The good infant teacher with her ingenuity, must make 'learning to read' seem like play—but it must be purposeful play. When a child builds, paints, or models in clay,

there is the satisfaction of an 'end product'. As he reads, he must have a sense of achievement as his end product.

If we are not to push reading, have we to wait for that magic moment we hear so much about, which is called 'reading readiness'? Some, I fear, would leave the infant school and we could have waited in vain! The teacher must pull out all the stops to attract children to read. She can make a great show of selecting her favourite book from the book corner. As she reads, she can share the printed words with her children, and the pleasureable enjoyment of the story will be connected with the book and it is noped that by tomorrow some child will choose that same book and ask "What does this say?" To me this is the moment of 'reading readiness' for that child, and the good teacher will make time at that moment to share the book again with the child.

If we are not to push and not to wait, there must be a middle approach road to reading. Taking into account the preschool experience of the child and his linguistic ability, he can be shown that squiggles on a page or a card 'say something'. Labelling objects in the classroom can be fun if turned into a game and the labels changed, matched or collected each day. Preserve us from labels that are pinned up until they fade! The good infant teacher will have a collection of words which she knows are the common ones used in most reading schemes. She can turn these into scores of games, changing the game each day so as to keep alive the interest of the child. Stepping stones (crossing the river only if you know the stone), bingo, (matching words), pelmanism (matching words in pairs), I spy, hide and seek, flash cards, are only a few of the games which most infant teachers can produce at a moment's notice. Reading this way will be a game, and with repetition the words will be photographed and remembered and the child's feeling of achievement will reward his efforts as he finds he can recognise words.

Writing precedes reading in my school. The class news book made by teacher and children, is better than most primers on the market today. If the child has written the words from his own experience, he is half way to remembering them, and in this way, reading has real meaning. I am old fashioned enough to believe that a child should be taught to write—

writing and reading together make good bed-fellows. Cards with general items of news like 'Today is Monday, the sun is shining', 'Mummy took me to the shops', 'My Daddy is at work', and so on, can be made in abundance and children can select and copy and read all at the same time. The teacher can also make large floor books from stories which have been suggested by the children and played out in drama. The children illustrate the books, and this leads naturally to the first reading book which is made by the child himself. On the first page he writes: "My name is Peter" (picture of Peter). Second page: "I live in a house" (picture of a house), Third page: "I come to school" (picture of school). A page is added to the book each day, and previous pages will be re-read whether the teacher requests it or not. The finished book is taken home to be read to patient relatives—"I can read it" is a cry of triumph.

Remembering that most of the words used are in the early books of most schemes, the child can now pass to a 'reading book'. The speed at which he reads this book gives him a sense of achievement and leads him into the book corner. With the teacher's help, he can choose books which he can read in school, or take home to share with his parents. Care must be taken that the subject matter suits the child. Every child has an interest, and this must be found and used as a bridge across to reading.

When do we read? With an integrated day, no schedule, multi-grade classes, etc., all day is reading time. Gone, we hope, are those terrible reading sessions when children waited for their name to be called.

Where do we read? Every classroom, I hope, has a comfortable reading corner, with mats and cushions and an old chair if possible. Does it matter if the child lies on his tummy to read? There are no statistics to prove that a soldier like stance at the side of the teacher improves reading. Atmosphere and environment are all important.

How do we test the child? Do we put ticks in boxes? Do we pull this tender plant out of the soil each week to see if the roots are growing, or do we look at the healthy sheen on the leaves and watch for the flower to grow from the bud? It will if the soil is fertile, and there is sun and rain! The output

of quality talk and writing is the best test I know of whether a child can read.

Which method and scheme shall we use? John and Jane are not the same and there is no one method to suit all children. Are we to use phonics, look and say, a combination of both, or some of the schemes like I.T.A. or colour match? The teacher is all important. She will use best the method which appeals to her and will adapt it to suit her children. The child with a good visual memory will thrive on 'look and say'. The child with a good ear may succeed with a 'phonic' method. The combination of both will probably suit most children, the good teacher introducing sounds at the appropriate moment. The best books from a multiplicity of schemes should be chosen for our reading corners, and should be chosen for their content and attractive appearance. The subject matter must appeal to the individual child and he must be attracted by what it says.

It has been stated that nobody can teach a child to read. I would say there is no one way to teach a child, the method being wisely chosen to suit teacher and individual. Research has told us the teacher is all important. I know that the good infant teacher must stimulate her children by her enthusiasm; she must provide the right atmosphere; she must select a wide range of books to attract her children; she must have 'cards up her sleeve' to pull out when their interest is waning. Above all she must be there to give encouragement and praise, if her children are to leave the infant school with a real desire to read . . . not because she says so, but because she has awakened in them a real desire for the written word.

Toward Personal Growth through Reading

David M. Greene

The problem of reading in this country may be the result of misdirected good intentions. In an effort to teach reading we seem to have lost sight of the purpose of education, thereby creating conflict between the natural growth needs of learners and the contrived, artificial structure of the school. To deal with this situation it seems necessary to shift our focus from "teaching reading" to re-examining the intent of education.

The purpose of education in America must certainly be something of greater significance than the teaching of reading, for education must encompass reading and all of the other learning experiences that take place under the banner of education in a democracy. The contemporary philosopher J. Krishnamurti suggests that the purpose of education is the cultivation of "right relationship" between individuals and between the individual and society.(1) In "right relationship" there is complete freedom to understand the other, to communicate directly. There is communion, a participation which is free from fear. This is a significant statement of purpose, since it is the relationship between individuals that creates society, and therefore society cannot be considered as independent of the individuals within it.

An essential element in the understanding of relationship is awareness. Awareness is simply the understanding of what is. It is to see the total process of your thought and action without condemnation, since to condemn is one way of avoiding understanding. Awareness and an understanding of relationship form the basis of a philosophically and psychologically consistent view of instruction which I refer to as Personal Growth Education.(2)

Self-knowledge

The goals of Personal Growth Education are related to Krishnamurti's characteristics of the "right kind" of educa-

tion.(3) The initial goal is to provide the kind of educational experience which allows the student to develop an understanding of self rather than merely acquiring skills and accumulating information. Self-knowledge refers not to an image of self, but to an awareness of what is taking place within the self. Self-knowledge is to know our relationship with people, nature, ideas, and things. It is of great importance to be continuously alert and passively aware of our thinking and feeling, since to be aware is to see how accumulation of experience colors our view of life and affects our understanding of it. To be continuously aware is to see the reality of life as relationship.

Self-awareness and an understanding of relationship lead to the process described by Maslow as self-actualization, by Rogers as the fully-functioning person, and by Krishnamurti as the integrated individual.(4,5,6) It is this state of process which is designated as maximum personal growth. As such it is not a state of finality, but that point of internal freedom which permits the individual to see and experience with understanding.

If self-awareness is to be a result of education, what is to be learned must never become more important than the learner. While we want children to "learn to read," it is much more important for them to become aware of themselves and of the relationship of language (including written language) to their lives. This suggests that experiential approaches which allow the learner to experience language as he uses it, as others use it, and as he might use it are most desirable. Such approaches focus on the learner and learner awareness rather than on the mere acquisition of information and skills

The Integrated Process of Life

A second goal of Personal Growth Education is to help the individual to experience the integrated process of life. Education should be helping people to experience life as a whole. It is by understanding the whole that we gain an understanding of the parts; but an understanding of the parts without a consideration of the whole will not be complete understanding. Educators must be concerned with the total process of life. It is only through such understanding that

capacity and technical knowledge can assume an appropriate role in the life relationship.

The process of life is in the individual. It is taking place because the individual is, regardless of the degree of awareness on the part of the individual. By concentrating on isolated portions of this life and omitting others, we fail to help the person understand the interrelatedness of the parts within the whole. At best such education is unbalanced, for if life is relationship and if we are to help the student to understand what this means for him, we must recognize the necessity of helping him to see the total picture.

In schools today we pull life apart. We have created arbitrary and artificial separation between reading printed words and other elements of the curriculum. Related to this is the misconception that such reading alone carries the burden of instruction in comprehension, interpretation, and other thinking skills. Considering these two inaccuracies alone, it is understandable that students are unable to see how their life and school fit together when their teachers are unable to see the relationships that exist.

One result of this lack of understanding is the tendency of some schools to eliminate or reduce the time allotted for other subjects in order to devote more time to reading when an understanding of relationship would have revealed the folly of such curricular juggling. Reading is in relationship with all of the learning opportunities presented by the schools, and all of these are a part of the life relationship. If we are really concerned with education, we must be committed to helping people toward a clearer understanding of the relationship of life, language, and reading.

Maturity and Freedom

Another goal of Personal Growth Education is to help the individual to be mature and free. Related to this are concerns for the creation of values and for developing thoughtfulness and consideration.

Maturity is the ability to see and experience the complicated relationships of life. Maturity includes awareness of conditioning and of one's psychological process. Such awareness brings the freedom to move beyond those forces which

tend to mold and shape rather than permit full functioning. This freedom then permits one to consider and develop values instead of having one's values imposed by others. In addition, maturity and freedom also permit thoughtfulness and consideration to develop through understanding, rather than out of fear and punishment.

If maturity is a goal of education, then education for understanding must be more than indoctrination of established patterns. The learner must be able to find out for himself in an atmosphere in which there is freedom to question. The reading curriculum must provide for more than the memorization of sounds, symbols, and structures to allow children to see, hear, and use language in a variety of ways. This suggests that children of all ages will be read to, will listen to, will be listened to, and will read language used for different purposes and presented in different ways. Classrooms will feature opportunities for children to experiment with language in an atmosphere rich in language examples, including good collections of stories and poems.

The qualities of maturity and freedom are an essential part of the democratic way of life and are therefore legitimate goals of education in America. In practice, however, education often seems to be designed to train the child to conform to a pattern designed by someone else. The view of maturity presented here goes well beyond this to help the child to develop awareness of what is around and within him. It is through such awareness that an intelligent individual emerges who is capable of dealing with life as a whole.

While the student must be free to grow, the individual freedom of the teacher is also a necessary concern. Since self-awareness is one of the most basic goals of Personal Growth Education, it is necessary to have a curriculum which allows both teacher and student to develop this characteristic. Such a curriculum must provide the freedom to inquire. Thus it seems desirable to disregard programs which not only dictate what is to be learned and when, but also how and when it is to be taught. These should be replaced with approaches that provide teacher and student with a variety of opportunities to explore the relationship of language and life together.

An Integrated Individual

Another goal is to bring about an integrated individual. Integration refers to the unification of the total being in thought, word, and action. Applying this to education has implications for the content of, and approaches to curriculum. If the individual is to experience life as a whole, the curriculum must be presented in such a way that life can be dealt with as a whole. It is important to note that there is no single method for accomplishing this understanding or any other. Even more crucial is to realize that total involvement in total education implies that all the psychological processes and all the physical aspects of the individual will be involved in learning. We must begin with integrated individuals instead of merely considering such people in terms of a goal to be reached at some time in the future.

One of the implications of this is that any attempt to design a reading curriculum must include a consideration of the basic needs of learners if they are to feel free to move in the direction of maximum personal growth.(7) If the learner is to become integrated, what is learned and the conditions under which it is learned must provide for physical and affective, as well as cognitive considerations.

In order to feel free to move beyond the more basic needs, the learner must experience respect and affection within the relationship with teachers through the vehicle of curriculum. This in turn implies the need for congruence on the part of both teacher and learner. Congruence is defined by Rogers as being "without front or facade."(8) Personal growth demands personal awareness. If there are requirements to hide or modify feelings, or to conform to externally prescribed patterns, it is less likely that the student or the teacher will be able to understand either the true feelings or the conformed-to patterns. In addition, one is less likely to feel comfortable when it is not possible to be oneself.

An additional aspect of the relationship between student and teacher involves the student's perceptions of the teacher. It is important that the teacher be perceived as trustworthy, dependable, and supportive if the openness required for personal growth is to become a reality. Within such a cooperative

growth relationship there are opportunities for realistic self-evaluation that can aid the student in an understanding of his relationship to reading, and of reading to his life.

A final implication is that the curriculum must be student-centered and must permit movement beyond tradition. To focus the curriculum elsewhere is to force the student into a curricular mold since the emphasis would be on what is to be learned rather than on who is to do the learning. Similarly, tradition must never become more important than the learner, since growth becomes more difficult as the conditioning force of tradition becomes dominant. Movements away from the student are also movements away from individual freedom for both teacher and student. If one is focused on the student, one is more likely to be able to identify needs and respond appropriately. If, on the other hand, the focus is on "teaching reading," both teacher and student can become captives of a method or a program.

Understanding and Acceptance

The last, but no less significant goal of a personal growth approach to education is to understand the child as he is without imposing on him an ideal of what others think he should be. This is in no way a denial of the forces within the culture which do work to shape the child, but is instead a recognition of them. With all of the many forces at work prior to and during the time the child is in contact with the school, the school, in educating the child, should be concerned with bringing about awareness of these forces instead of merely becoming another force for conditioned unawareness.

This implies that there must be provision for an unconditional acceptance of students. To deny or reject the current status of the student is to communicate to him that he does not fit into the mold of acceptability which you have designed. In so doing it is also clear that the mold has become more important than the student. Unconditional acceptance provides one with the freedom to be oneself and, in addition, provides for a consideration of one's wants and needs.

When we impose an ideal we are not only encouraging conformity, we are producing fear in the child as well as conflict between what he is and what he ought to be. One who

really cares about someone does not look through a screen of ideals, but instead seeks to understand the individual by observation and study of the total person. A teacher who is concerned with ideals risks becoming incapable of understanding the child. As the ideal becomes more important than the learner, effort is spent trying to find a method that will enable the child to reach some ideal state.

An example related to this is the continuous search for an ideal method to teach reading. Such search for methodology is wasted effort, for only a study of each pupil can lead to an understanding of the individual's needs. It is this awareness that permits an understanding of method. The pursuit of an ideal is a denial of the basic human qualities of the student, as is the pursuit of method. Understanding is not to be found in such pursuits, but rather through an immediate awareness of what is. Thus it becomes the responsibility of the educator to help the child to understand all of the inherited and environmental forces which result in conditioning, so that he might become integrated.

Reading and Personal Growth

While reading can never be *the* purpose of education, it is an essential part of our lives. The challenge then, is to stop "teaching reading" and start helping children to grow in an understanding of life. The task of the educator must be to help the learner understand the relationship of reading to his immediate life. Thus the teacher must consider implementing, in a very real sense, goals and strategies such as those suggested previously. To accomplish this is to help the individual toward personal growth and to make learning to read worthwhile.

In the final analysis the personal growth experience is concerned with human growth and development in a very significant way. This concern is not so much a matter of waiting for growth and development to happen, as it is a recognition that it does happen. A personal growth focus provides for an understanding of oneself as well as others, for the learning of meaningful skills and information, and for the kind of preparation necessary to help children function effectively as citizens in a democracy. Reading and all other cur-

ricular experiences can become real as we look at them through a deep look at ourselves. Thus, Personal Growth Education is not a way of education, it is human education, personal education, and social education. It is a way of life, if not life itself.

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Realism in Children's Books

Robert Burch

For a while my favorite topic for a talk has been *new* realism in children's books, but today I'm pleased to be talking about realism in general rather than the new variety only. Of course, the thing that is new, or relatively new in recent years, is not realism itself but our acceptance of a stronger reality in the books that we offer our young people, and I favor the trend toward stories that are more honestly realistic. Some of them are concerned with matters that are depressing, but if we're to give our readers an honest view of the world around them, who can deny that some of it is depressing—even horrible—and in many instances affects young people directly. An extreme example: the brutal slaying of the twenty-seven teen-age boys in Houston. If we could protect all young people from such heinous crimes, we could leave all references to atrocities out of their stories. But since we cannot, we should not mislead anyone into thinking that no hazards exist. On the other hand, we need not dwell on danger, especially in stories for the very young. An Atlanta woman, a dean at Georgia State University, visited Russia to study day care centers, and she reported on stories that were told the children there. According to her, "One was about a poor little sick mouse who goes from one animal to another seeking help and comfort. He finally finds comfort from the cat . . . and disappears."(1) That's grim realism, but I've begun to think of realism in stories not only in terms of the so-called "new," which all too often is synonymous with "grim," reality, but also as realism in its broader sense, which balances the pessimistic and negative with more positive and optimistic views.

For a few years I read rather extensively in realism for children, and when invited to take part in conferences such as this one I could talk about what was happening in the field. Whether I could talk intelligently about it is a different matter, but in any event I enjoyed expressing my opinion on the books that other people were producing. But this past year, because of responsibilities at home and manuscript deadlines that have a way of sneaking up on me, I haven't read as

widely as I should have, and I'm sorry. I'd much rather talk about what I think someone else is doing wrong, mind the other fellow's business, in effect, than have to think too seriously about my own work—the risk being, of course, that I'll stumble onto the harsh truth that it isn't only "those other writers" who make mistakes! Be that as it may, this seemed an appropriate time to examine my own objectives in realism.

I'd like to say, however, that while I've singled out realism for our discussion, I'm certainly not advocating only realistic stories for children. Like any kind of diet, a reading one is healthier if balanced. But, also like other diets, each of us may go heavier on one thing than another. I personally like fantasy very much. So much can be said in it, and in such an entertaining way, that I'm envious of the people who can write it. I also like exciting stories about adventures that could possibly happen but aren't really very true to life. But today I'd like to consider stories that are strongly realistic—the kind we give to young readers, saying, "This is about *real* life."

CHARACTERIZATION

In real life and in stories, I like to get to know the people with whom I come in contact, so I would put believable characterization at the head of a list of requirements for such stories. Probably every writer has his or her own way of working to invent life-like characters, and I've discovered that I get into trouble if I try writing a story before I've taken sufficient time to get to know the characters who will appear in it. If I go to the trouble to think about them until they seem more real than made-up, they are apt to repay me by writing the rest of the story themselves. That's an exaggeration, but it's basically my approach: I invent the characters and then try to let the plot grow as naturally as possible out of character development and the circumstances of the time and place in which the story is set.

In a children's story it's important that the characters not only be believeable, but that readers be able to care about, and identify with, some of them. Maybe we adults will read novels about characters that would be more at home in a case study, but we adults do a lot of things that children won't

In realism, characters with whom a reader is expected to identify should have faults as well as virtues. In my life I've known very few people who have seemed almost perfect—and it was an awful strain to be around them! Give me friends who have some faults and maybe I'll be less dissatisfied with my own. Maybe the same is true with a young reader and his fictional friends; maybe he's more comfortable around them if they aren't so sophisticated and genteel that he considers himself a clod by comparison.

Of course, it's possible to go to the opposite extreme, to ask the reader to identify with characters who are so crude that by contrast an average person might be expected to feel better about himself, but it doesn't seem to work that way. I'm always a bit ashamed of myself if I'm seduced into siding with the bad guys.

Paul Zimmerman wrote in *Newsweek* that movies this past year were more cynical than ever. He said, "Never has the American screen created so many reprobates, cheats and murderers in a single year, or made heroes of so many crooked cops, killers and con men."(2) He spoke of it as a "corrosively jaundiced atmosphere," and it's an atmosphere that I hope will not become a part of realistic fiction for young people. I hope that when we include, for example, crooked cops or con men in our stories that we'll show them as crooked cops and con men instead of heroes, bearing in mind that the object is to reflect life, not distort it.

VALUES

The next thing I would think about has to do with values. I would say moral values, but "moral" is out nowadays, and I do so want to be in style! C. S. Lewis said that anyone who can write a children's story without a moral, had better do so,(3) and for some books maybe that's true, but have you every read a junior novel in which the author hasn't attempted to hold it together with a central theme? And can you imagine a theme for a children's story, strong enough to hold together anything, that isn't essentially a moral, or at least morally sound?

Values are a part of any story, whether or not the writer consciously puts them there. They'll appear in the way the

characters regard each other, how they look at success and failure—do they measure it by real achievement and fulfillment or by the dollar sign?—their respect or lack of it for the rights and property of others, and in countless other ways.

I once made a talk entitled "Times Change but Moral Values Do Not," but, of course, I was dead wrong. I often am! In that instance, what I had in mind were the basic values, and it seems to me that they do not change, that honesty is honesty, whether in the old days or nowadays, and cheating is cheating, no matter when. Sadly, our views of even these most basic values appear to be changing, but I hope that in children's books we won't try to bend them into something they are not. We should never leave the impression, for example, that sometimes it's best to look the other way and not worry too much about corruption, perhaps implying that the whole world's going to hell, anyway. We should reinforce the idea that the world won't go to hell unless we let it.

SETTING

I'll move on to another requirement for a realistic story for boys and girls, and that is that it provide the reader with a very real sense of the time and the place in which it is happening. Naturally, any story has a setting, but in a realistic one, if attention is paid to proper detail, a reader begins to see a place and get a feeling of what it's like—or, in stories set in the past, what it *was* like.

Many places are covered over by deep layers of cliches, and often they are perpetuated by what people want to believe. We adults are frequently stubborn, and I've heard it claimed that we often read to reinforce our own convictions. But children do not. That's one of the nice things about them: They seldom have formed views that are all but inalterable. At the same time, whatever they come across in a story that is set in a real place will make some type of impression, and it may be the beginning of their knowledge of a specific locale. Therefore we must be honest with them, neither shielding them from the decadence of any area, if it's an integral part of the story, nor going to the opposite extreme and serving up a Chamber of Commerce happyland.

VIOLENCE

Also, in a realistic story I would pay attention to violence and the way it is shown. I'm not referring to riots and rebellion, but to frustration and fear—and to helping the reader see the explosive possibilities when feelings of guilt and anger are sealed within us. We can show him that hostilities can build up in anyone, and that there are ways of coping with them. All too often, the way of coping with them in what he may see around him is to point a gun at someone and pull the trigger. That kind of behavior threatens all of us, and while society is undoubtedly responsible for some of the violence we have in books, television, and movies today, I wonder if it doesn't work both ways and if these things at times do not further rather than reflect a sickness in society. Hopefully, in the children's field, we are not careless in such matters. In most of my stories I've preferred themes of gentleness, but in the future I may attempt to face up to this brink of violence that we all live on.

HUMOR

The final requirement I would make of a realistic story is that it contain some, or even a great deal of, humor. Much in life is funny, so why should realism lack humor?

A while back C. S. Lewis wrote that he was "breeding up a race of young people who are as solemn as the brutes," and he went on to speak of adults who are overly solemn. He argued that literary Puritans are too serious as men to be seriously receptive as readers. According to him, they have not fairly and squarely laid their minds open, without preconception, to the works they read.(4)

But children do lay their minds open, and of the many qualities we can encourage them to develop, a sense of humor may be of the most help to them throughout their lives. James Thurber said, "Humor is a serious thing. I like to think of it as one of our greatest and earliest national resources which must be preserved at all costs."(5) Being a humorist, he would naturally have felt that way, but people in far different fields have commented on the subject. Mahatma Gandhi said, "If I had no sense of humor, I would long ago have committed suicide,"(6) and Abraham Lincoln once said, "With the fear-

ful strain that is on me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die."(7)

Somewhere I read that men have confessed to murder and various crimes, faults, and character defects over the years, but that no one has ever confessed to lacking a sense of humor. I don't doubt that young people of today know how to laugh, but at times I'm concerned about what they laugh at. I'm frequently appalled by skits on television which seem grotesque or cruel, offered to us as entertainment and made worse when a laugh track is there to inform us that what we're seeing is wildly funny. This is a brand of intimidation, isn't it, a sinister hint that if we do not agree and laugh hysterically—or obediently—then something clearly is wrong with us. I realize that children do not have a subtle sense of humor, and I admit to enjoying a certain amount of slapstick myself, but as we mature, hopefully we learn that a slide on the old banana peel may be quite funny, but the misfortune of others is not really a hilarious matter. Thomas Carlyle said: "True humor springs not more from the head than from the heart. It is not contempt; its essence is love."(8) I'm afraid that too much of today's humor is contempt, and I hope that in children's books we can get across the idea that true humor does indeed spring from the heart. In realism we can attempt to show that while life may be harsh, it is also good and exciting—and at times downright funny.

CONCLUSION

Maybe it says something about all of us that we're inclined to look on realism as what Walter de la Mare called "a record of life at a low pitch and ebb viewed in the sunless light of day, so often a drab waste of gray and white, and an east wind blowing."(9) Surely we don't look on life, which realism presumably mirrors, in this way. Or maybe we do. Maybe that's why, too many of us try to escape from it either with a quick getaway or by dropping out through the use of alcohol and drugs. If so, I hope we won't inflict our pessimism on the young, and it seems to me that realistic stories are a way of making positive statements about the merits of life, along with a warning here and there of its pitfalls.

And that seems an appropriate place for me to get

around to a stopping place, but first I should tell you that while I was preparing for this visit with you I came across a surprising reference to our subject of discussion. Im still groping my way in the field of realism, but it is a field that interests me primarily, and I'm interested in your views of it also. And since I've taken your time to listen to me say how much faith I have in realism and what it can do, I can't resist repeating this one-line comment that was made some years ago by India's Prime Minister Nehru: He said, "Most advocates of realism in this world are hopelessly unrealistic."(10)

In that case the joke's on me. The humor turns to irony, and maybe that's another thought for realistic stories; maybe we can show youngsters that it's not a terrible thing when a joke turns out to be on us!

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Tenth Recognition of Merit

GEORGE G. STONE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Claremont Graduate School

Claremont, California

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Presentation of Recognition of Merit to Robert Burch

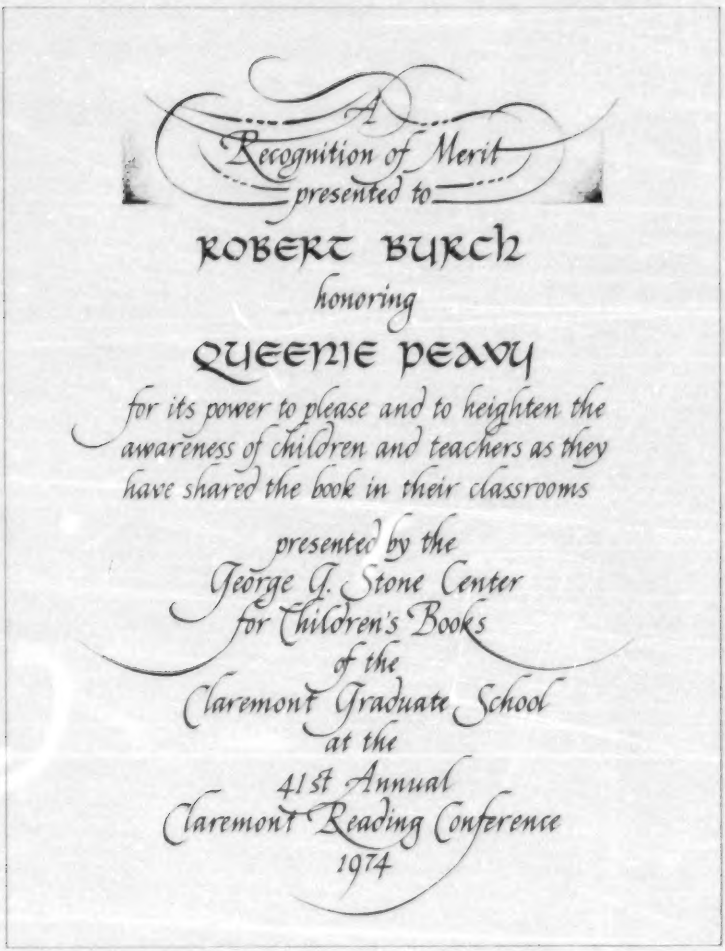
by GAY COLLINS

Queenie Peavy became an acquaintance of mine two years after its publication. I needed a book to read aloud to my class and Queenie was chosen in haste, minutes before the literature period. The title intrigued me and I needed a book with a girl protagonist. Choosing a book hastily, impulsively, to read aloud to a class is poor practice, to say the least, and I only confess to it now because in this instance it turned out to be the perfect choice. From the very first sentence, "Queenie Peavy was the only girl in Cotton Junction who could chew tobacco," the class and I were totally captivated.

Besides spitting tobacco, 13 year old Queenie could hurl a rock with "deadly aim," outclassing any boy around. Her pranks added to her notoriety in school and her sharp tongue and rude behavior even intimidated her teachers. In short, Queenie publicly thumbed her nose at the world. It was only with her pet rooster or the neighbor children that Queenie could relax her tough facade enough to show an inner goodness. The hard facts of the depression in a Georgia backwater were not capable of oppressing Queenie's spirit. It was the fact that her father was in the penitentiary for armed robbery that caused her pain; and her rage and resentment led to increasing difficulties that threatened to send Queenie away to the reformatory. The return of her father only served to catapult Queenie toward the most precarious of choices, to aggravate her hurts by a rebellious withdrawal from life or to take stock, and allow life to happen to her. Reluctantly she acknowledged her need to choose the latter course.

There is no doubt that the many children who have taken this book to their hearts identify with Queenie. Her struggles to overcome her difficulties and still remain true to herself are fundamental to all children, no matter what their circumstances. Queenie provides a model, so necessary in coping with the vicissitudes of growing up and in widening one's perspective on the world. Knowing about Queenie's world and times provides children with a realistic, unsentimental statement of some truths they need to know. From Queenie every child can take strength to face the uncertain future.

So, on behalf of those children and their teachers and librarians, all over Southern California, who continue to discover and love *Queenie Peavy*, I proudly present this tenth George G. Stone Recognition of Merit to Queenie's creator, Robert Burch.


A
Recognition of Merit
presented to
ROBERT BURCH
honoring
QUEENIE PEAVY
for its power to please and to heighten the awareness of children and teachers as they have shared the book in their classrooms
presented by the
George G. Stone Center
for Children's Books
of the
Claremont Graduate School
at the
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Acceptance Message

by

ROBERT BURCH

I'm grateful to all of you for this award and am especially pleased that the views of children were considered in making it.

Although I occasionally hear of an author who benefits from the response of children to a story while it's being written, most of us are not so fortunate. Children who are close to me are inclined to offer only favorable criticism of my work if they care for me personally. If, on the other hand, they don't like me, well, who wants advice from anyone with such poor taste! So I work alone, not knowing if what I'm doing will interest anybody until after I've invested months, even years, in a manuscript. Sometimes I've failed, and editors have persuaded me that a story should be put into an old footlocker instead of print, and at such times I've been thankful for my farm background in which it was necessary to take in stride a crop failure, no matter what it represented in time and labor. But the risks involved make any success even sweeter, and nothing could give me a warmer, more optimistic feeling that perhaps my work is finding an audience, that children are alive and well and out there reading, than to have this Recognition of Merit from the George G. Stone Center for Children's Books.

I'm pleased also that the award represents the approval of teachers. All of us in the writing profession appreciate the dedication of you teachers to what you are doing, and we realize that you help us in many and varied ways. A child told me last year that his teacher was reading one of my stories to his class, and I hated to say, "Oh, yeah? What do you think of it?" lest it embarrass him if he not think much of it. At that time I was researching an article on reading aloud, so I asked instead, "Does your teacher read well?" The boy answered enthusiastically, "Oh, yes, she's a good reader! Why, she makes your story better than it is!"

I'm indebted to you adults—teachers and librarians especially—for your tremendous support always, and I'm touched and deeply honored by this Recognition of Merit from you and the children of Southern California. Thank you again.

On the Notion That Sense Is in the Eye of the Beholder, with Special Reference to the Horror Movie

W. C. Watt

Even while shrinking from the usual strained comparison between language and other means of communication we can identify, if only for the purposes of exposition, some points of resemblance between movies and books. At the gross level of structural correspondence we might, for instance, relate a book (or story) to the whole movie; chapters to sequences; paragraphs to scenes; sentences to shots; and (perhaps) so on. At a somewhat more interesting level we might observe that, even though it will later in life be taken for granted, everyone has had to learn how to interpret both media, since one's competence in one's native language must be overlaid by a "reading" competence in order to understand either. The point is obvious for printed matter, less so for movies; but even in the latter case not hard to make. The movie is generally regarded as the most naturalistic of the arts, but when seeing a movie one is not in fact seeing nature, so that knowing how to interpret the world around one will not suffice to let one come to a full understanding of a movie. For example, shots are conjoined in modern movies chiefly by one of three means: the "cut"; the "fade"; and the "dissolve" (or "[over-]lap" dissolve). That is, one shot can be followed by another with nothing intervening at all ("cut"); or the first shot can fade to darkness and the following shot fade in from darkness ("fade-out" and "fade-in"); or the first shot can blend gradually into the next shot ("dissolve"). The first two means of "punctuation"(1) correspond very roughly to the semicolon and sentence-break respectively. The dissolve is a more particularly cinematic convention by which, for example, a remembered scene ("flashback") or imagined event is introduced as such; typically, the first shot shows a character beginning a reminiscence, then dissolves into a portrayal of what he is remembering. In sum, then, there are different kinds of conjunctions joining shots: and their meaning must,

manifestly, be learned before the typical movie will make any sense at all. As knowing the language must be augmented in order to read, so knowing the language and knowing the world must be augmented in order to "read" movies.

Turning now to my central point, I have devoted the foregoing remarks to establish a "reading" correspondence between movies and the printed page in order to provide a narrow bridge from which best to view a chasm. For we do not understand a printed page or a movie by understanding the individual sentences (or shots) plus the expressed connectives (punctuations and paragraph or chapter breaks on the one hand, "cuts" and so on on the other). Here is a simple story:

> Once there was a little boy who had a little red wagon. He took it to the store. At the store, he got a big box. He took the box outside, and then he took it home. When he got it home, a little puppy jumped out!

The reader is now invited to make the following experiment: read no further for the next ten minutes, and then pick up this page again and check off, below, the sentences which were NOT in the above story:

(1) Once there was a little boy who had a little red wagon.
(2) He went to the store to get a big box.
(3) He took the wagon to the store to get a big box.
(4) He took the box outside, put it in his wagon, and took it home.
(5) He took the box outside, put the wagon in the box, and took it home.
(6) He took the box outside, took the wagon home, and when he got home a little puppy jumped out of it!

Having completed his task, the reader is now invited to compare his check-list with the story as originally given: he will discover that, of the six test sentences, only the first was actually in the story itself. However, that was not a memory test in the usual sense, for here, indeed, to err is human. The sentences we think were in the story, but which were not, are after all *as if* they had been in it, in that they make perfect sense, express what we learned from the story, could or should have been in the story, and so on. Sentence (2) says

the boy went to the store *in order to* get a big box, which the actual story does not say at all—but then, why else would he go to the store and get a box if that had not been his purpose in going there? Sentence (4) says he took the box outside and put it in his wagon, which the original story certainly does not say; but why take the wagon if not to use it? This sentiment is underscored by the last two test sentences, which nobody thought were in the story precisely because they seem to contradict sentence (4) (which, remember, wasn't in the story either): that is, sentence (5) asserts that the boy took the box home with the wagon inside (very large box or very small wagon; in either case, very dull boy for hauling useless wagon); while sentence (6) asserts, or seems to, that the boy went into the store and got a box, brought it outside, then left it there and made off with his wagon. If the reader has performed on the test sentences as most people do he is in a position to confess that he was willing to accept as sentences from the story: (a) sentences which were not in fact from the story, and moreover (b) sentences which made assertions (e.g., that the box went into the wagon) that the story itself did not make. Conclusion: one remembers more than one was told; or, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

The sentences which one misthinks one remembers are sentences which express things that one can safely assume to have happened if the story being told is to make sense.(2) Reading the little story above, we automatically furnish the information that when the boy took the box outside he put it in his wagon, just as if we had heard a sentence to that effect; later, we tend to forget which sentences we read and which we supplied ourselves, and are willing to "remember" a self-supplied sentence as one read. The self-supplied sentences might seem at first to have the function of "bridging" gaps between the sentences of the story proper; but this is not quite correct. Of the "test sentences" which followed the story, sentence (2)—"He went to the store to get a big box"—establishes the boy's purpose, which the story itself does not bother to state and which, more importantly, *the story did not directly imply*. So sentence (2) is actually an "illegitimate inference" from the story, an inference we make on the basis of expectancies about how the story as presented hangs to-

gether in a world like the one we know. Boys may or may not take wagons to stores and leave with boxes only if they went there in order to do so: but we have expectations about the probabilities in such matters. What a story leaves out is what it can afford to leave out, which is what it can predict will be supplied, which is what we can supply on the basis of expectation; this is grounded on our experience in the world, the benchmark for the "possible world" of the story. Since, then, the story says nothing about why the boy went to the store, we infer from this silence that the purpose is the one that is "obvious" (predictable) to us. A story gives us the sentences that are "news" to us, and we make the story make sense by furnishing any needed sentences that, precisely because they are predictable, are not "news." (So if the boy had gone to the store with some other purpose in mind, but had gotten a box, that would run counter to our expectations and, being "news", would have had to be stated explicitly.)

Parenthetically, we might observe that the sentences of a well-written story *may not* tell us "the whole truth," on pain of prolixity; they are pretty much restricted to just those sentences which give us "news." It is no more important to know how to express oneself well than it is to know when not to express oneself at all.

Mostly, this impulse to make sense out of what we are told leads us to fit what we are told to what we already know, with what results (and mis-recollections) we have seen; but, oddly, sometimes what is required is quite the opposite: we must forget what we know. To take any interest in a story we must treat it as if it had happened, were "real"; we must in Coleridge's phrase lend it a "willing suspension of disbelief." And this, my final point, returns us to the movies.

Any movie containing elements of fantasy requires integration of the movie's story with a "possible world" very different from the actual one; as we know somewhere in the back of our minds all through any space-travel movie, for example, men have not yet in fact come into contact with extraterrestrials (whether or not horned, hexapod, or whatever). Horror movies do this also; we know that no amount of stitching will make a cadaver walk, and few who are scared by cinematic werewolves believe in lycanthropy. But horror

movies often demand more. Many of them occur in series; and the "possible world" that each sequel demands is generally, on several inescapable points, in conflict with the "possible world" demanded by its antecedents in the sequence, which antecedents are often well-known to the audience (sometimes being shown in tandem with the latest arrival, sometimes yielding up segments which the new sequel bodily incorporates). In addition—a problem with any sequence of movies—some of the recurring characters are, inevitably, played by different actors, which exacts what we could call a "forcible suspension of disbelief" of still another kind. In *The Mummy* of 1932 the title figure, played by the great Boris Karloff, was turned to dust by the goddess Isis; in *The Mummy's Hand* of 1940 the mummy, played by an out-of-work cowboy actor named Tom Tyler, is nevertheless still abroad, though he has now changed his name (once Im-ho-tep, now Kharis), occupation (once Priest, now Prince), and sin (once thief of Scroll of Thoth, now thief of the life-restoring "tana leaves"). In *The Mummy's Tomb* of 1942 the title figure, now played by Lon Chaney, is revived by a feeding of tana leaves but then destroyed by fire; in *The Mummy's Ghost* and *The Mummy's Curse*, both of 1944, Chaney's mummy sinks into a swamp in the former and, in the latter, is revived when the swamp is drained and then "killed" in the collapse of a monastery. Each sequel in a horror series has, as we can see, the following problem: the monster must "die" at the end in a satisfactorily cathartic fashion, but yet not be so "dead" that he cannot plausibly be revivified at the opening of the next movie in the sequence. The problem is compounded by the fact that often the first movie in a sequence was not viewed as such at the time it was made, so that sometimes the thematic monster dies rather too well. In the "original" *Frankenstein* of 1931, the monster (Boris Karloff) is, as everyone remembers, "killed" in the flaming collapse of the windmill in which he had taken refuge; but in *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935) it is explained that the monster fell down into a deep cellar under the mill and somehow survived. Disappointed in his intended's response to his marital plans, the monster—still Karloff—at the end of the movie cries "We belong dead!" and brings down the laboratory onto both their heads. In *Son of*

Frankenstein (1938) it is explained that the monster survived in a sulfur-pit now revealed to lie under the laboratory, though there is some problem with this explanation since at the end the same monster (Karloff again, for the last time) falls into the same sulfur-pit and appears to expire there. Of course the audience by this time knows better, and in *Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942) no one could take exception when the sulfur dries out (this is two years before the Mummy's swamp is drained) and the monster walks again: the attentive might, of course, have had belief-suspension problems caused by the monster's change of visage, since it was now Lon Chaney under the make-up. At the end, he is destroyed by fire. Later the same year, in *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf-Man*, the monster turns out, with no explanation, to have become preserved in ice; he emerges with some diminution of powers and in a third incarnation, being now played by Bela Lugosi. At the end the lab blows up, but somehow the monster is again preserved in ice, to be thawed out in *House of Frankenstein* (1944), in the process entering still a fourth avatar in the person of Glenn Strange, who at the end is chased into a nearby bog. Finally, the monster is found languishing in a "Devil's Hole" in the *House of Dracula* (1945); suspension of disbelief is perhaps aided by the monster's being still played by Strange.(3)

To take one last set of examples, in a seemingly inexhaustible series of Japanese horror movies the cities of Tokyo, Yokohama, and Osaka have been laid waste time and again by one or another monster only to have been completely rebuilt—in a few months, judging from things like the persistence of automobile styles—in time for the next one. *Goke* the vampire jelly of 1968 followed *Viras* the interstellar squid of 1967 which followed *Gyaos* the winged fox of 1967 which followed *Gappa* the big lizard of 1967 which followed *Ebirah* the colossal crab of 1966 which followed *Gamera* the rotating turtle of 1965 which followed *Ghidrah* the three-headed monster of 1964 which followed *Dogora* the gigantic jellyfish of 1964 which followed *Matanga*, *Fungus of Terror* of 1963 which followed *Gorath* the rapacious reptile of 1962 which followed *Mothra* the death-dealing moth of 1961 which followed *Varan* the giant bat of 1958 which followed *Rodan* the terrible pterodactyl of 1956 which followed the ancestral *Godzilla*

in 1955(4), and each followed hard on the heels of the other into Tokyo, Yokohama, and/or Osaka. Here, almost beyond question, is the most frontal assault on suspended disbelief yet attempted. Yet, at least for many viewers of these productions, the attack must fail, and disbelief get suspended, for at least enough moments to keep them in their seats: for if it is not really Tokyo that Matanga the Terror-Fungus is attacking, it must be a model, and who cares what Matanga does to a model?

In all, then, the claim made earlier about horror movies seems well-justified: that insofar as they are tied together into sequences within which there are events that are not mutually compatible, there is no consistent "possible" world into which they can be fitted, and so the very act of integration that makes most stories comprehensible, must in these cases be partly abjured. Thus we have now seen two ways in which we make sense of stories: by integrating them fully into a "possible world"—generally, one very like the actual world—or by integrating them only so far as to keep clear of internal inconsistencies, arranging somehow not to be bothered by what we have to ignore.

Returning to our main point and to a statement made earlier, sense does indeed reside, if anywhere, in the eye of the beholder, for the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, even if some of the parts are discarded. To read, one must know how to add and subtract.

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How Should the Culturally Different Child Be Taught To Read?

Sarah Moskovitz

What must child and school offer each other in order that learning to read may take place? The following discussion summarizes some necessary conditions on the part of child and school respectively and suggests they be examined in relation to the culturally different and poverty child.

First, in terms of the Child.

1) *Physical status:* The child must be in reasonably good health, not malnourished, with ears and eyes able to receive information, a central nervous system free of insult, able to integrate, seek information and respond. Unfortunately we cannot assume this as a given in the child who comes to school out of poverty. The results of Headstart research clearly showed that an appalling number, in some cases as high as 20% of this population, needed care for vision, hearing or dental defect of a nature that could interfere with learning. With respect to malnutrition, the work done by Birch (2) et al. has shown that among the insidious effects of chronic malnutrition are two syndromes with far reaching implications for school success. (2) The first effect is a state of apathy, the second a state of irritability. Both of these result in behavior which adults find unacceptable, often making the child unlovable and setting up a deteriorating cycle of interpersonal relations with the teacher.

2) *Psycho-Social status:* The child must have developed some trust in adults out of their having allowed him autonomy in a period of intense dependency. In addition, the adults in his life have encouraged autonomy without demanding too early sacrifice of dependency. This balance between trust (feeling that "they will take care of me, they want the best for me") and autonomy (the feeling that "I can do it myself") results in the growth of initiative (the feeling that "I can try"). All of this contributes to a sense of self that is not overly sensitive to failure and is willing to take risks. This kind of behavior is synonymous with willingness to make in-

telligent guesses and learning new things throughout the life span. It includes the kind of ego capability it takes to participate in the give and take of a group.

Too often the illness, joblessness, chronic worry and consequent irritability of the parents in poverty result in a detrimental shortening of the period of dependency in order to free already overstressed adults from the child's attachment demands. In addition to this difficulty for the child, the cultural difference of the school itself may create a crisis of trust. Even in the case of the child who has built this within his own family and environs, the school's atmosphere and demands are sometimes too different for there to be a complete carryover. Then it follows that school must be a place where trust, autonomy and initiative can grow. Too often it is distrust, self mistrust and passivity or failure that schools inadvertently nurture.

The child's motivation is of course important. He must want to learn the skills and culture of the school because he wants to please adults there and at home. The tasks and offerings are rewarding to him and meet his childish interests and needs. In some cultures (as P. Dewitz has pointed out), his motivation is spurred because he senses that his culture values books, learning and wisdom. If he doesn't sense this, the school has a challenge to model the valuing of these as effectively as it has in the past modeled valuing being quiet and busyness.*

3) *Cognitive Development:* What must he bring in order to deal with meaning symbolically, that is, to learn to read? The child must have a rich stockpile of meaningful language and many combinations of sound and meaning for which the school will teach him the appropriate graphic symbolization.

The Spanish-speaking and Black-English-speaking young child have in common the fact that they bring to school a language which will be ignored for purposes of learning to read; it won't be graphically symbolized in school. Too often in both cases, because the school chooses to ignore the basic storehouse of already-achieved language, the child is treated as if he had no worthwhile language. Yet we know that both black

*personal communication

dialect and the language of the barrio *are* worthwhile, linguistically respectable media. However, the situation of the Black differs from the Spanish-speaker. There is now some evidence that the Black child understands and may learn to read the Standard English, although he may pronounce it as Black English and even transform it to conform to Black English usage. He has a reservoir of meaningful English which he can understand, although it is not and though he does not use Standard English himself. The Spanish-speaking child, in contrast, is often in the position of being asked to learn to read a language he doesn't understand or understands poorly. This is asking him to attach one set of unknown graphic symbols to another set of non-existent language symbols. No wonder failure and discouragement are inevitable for teachers and children. The child who does not have the language in which he is asked to learn to read has little or no meaningful context to make the printed language come alive and no syntactic structures with which to predict further meaning.

So, to summarize an answer to the question of *when* can the child learn to read, we say:

1) when he is in sufficient good health to be alert and able to concentrate (and here as a society we need to take greater responsibility for this factor)
2) when he has enough confidence to enable him to participate
3) when he has some motivation to do what is being done at school, and an appreciation of its value to him
4) when he has a language base to which graphic symbols can be meaningfully associated. (We may legislate when to begin, but we cannot legislate the child's readiness, and must patiently work to create it and not set unrealistic one-year time-tables for it.)

Now what seem to be some important conditions on the school's side which influence our understanding of when and how to teach reading? In that institution, in the form of its administrators, teachers, procedures, there must be:

1) *Respect for the child as a unique human being, as a member of his family* and as a *member of his community.* We know that on this score schools have not done very well. The

assumption on the part of most teachers has been that the child's ethnicity is not a part of the classroom life and, in effect, is to be left on the doorstep so that assimilation into the Anglo culture can take place. The assumption that it can be left on the doorstep is erroneous. Ethnicity that goes underground often does so at the cost of shame and resentment. The fascinating research of Fifer, Lesser and Clark (1969) with hundreds of children in New York and Boston has shown that ethnicity does indeed play a very important part in shaping learning styles, interests and abilities. Understanding these and teaching to these strengths would be a constructive change from teaching that harps on weakness.

2) There must be *respect for and faith in the child's educability.* A great deal of research stressing cultural and social class differences has been erroneously misinterpreted in a causal rather than correlational fashion. Basil Bernstein,(1) who influenced much of this type of research, has reprimanded his followers by saying:

> There is nothing but nothing in dialect as such which prevents a child from internalizing and using universalistic meaning. But if the contexts of learning, the samples, the reading books are not samples which trigger the child's imagination, are not Triggers on his curiosity and explorations in his family and community, then the child is not at home in the educational world.(1)

Yet there is, as Roger Schuy has pointed out, a teaching folklore that hangs on to certain fallacies. The first is that disadvantaged children come to school with meager vocabularies, neglecting the fact that the vocabulary may be meager in Standard English though not in Black English (or Spanish). Based on extensive research in homes in Washington and Detroit, he concludes that

> . . . the notion that children of disadvantaged homes are products of language deprivation seems to prove only that the investigators proved to be too great a cultural barrier or did not ask the right questions, or we might add were looking for S E responses.(9)

A second fallacy he mentions is the notion that these children, unlike other people, do not speak in complete sen-

tences and therefore do not have complete thoughts. (For analysis of this position, see Moskovitz, 1968).

What then can the school do? With what understandings must we proceed?

First, heed Bernstein's caution to make the child at home in the educational world; *Second*, use the language which the child brings to school as we introduce him to the world of book language; *Third*, acknowledge Vygotsky's and Piaget's insights into the separateness of language and thought, thus freeing us to respect the thoughts of children whose language expresses thought differently and to respect children who as yet do not have *our* language to express *their* thoughts. Via these understandings we may help to clear the debris of racist fallout which serves as a barrier to the ability of young children to take advantage of the Standard English learning offered them during the period of language learning's greatest plasticity. Given this period of early language learning facility, Susan Ervin Tripp asks, "Why does being taught in foreign language (English or French) work for children in Montreal and fail for Chicano, Puerto Rican (etc.) in the United States?" Cazden, discussing this, points out the key factor may be the interference of a cast attitude.(3) In other words, where a dominant culture is teaching a non-dominant culture, in effect, the *language of assimilation*, of *giving part of itself away*, there may be resistance.

Fourth, we must remember that culturally-different children represent as wide a range of individual differences as any other children. The school must offer the child appropriate experiences of interest to him, which implies a wide range of approaches to reading that are different in type and style but which have in common personalization, caring for the child as a whole, not just his reading achievement score. (This may mean facing up to the moral issue of whether funding should be tied to evaluation based on reading scores.)

Every introductory educational psychology class stresses the range of individual differences, yet in educational practice the way these individual differences are met is still too often by grouping into low, middle and high groups, and limited crossage achievement combinations. Children are fitted into the system of organization, basal readers, and tests standardized

on other populations, inappropriate for them. Changing the system or teaching-strategy to suit the child could be helpful. We think too much in terms of changing the child to fit the system. Here's an example: In a recent study, James Turnure sent raters to assess boys and girls on their attentiveness to the teacher during beginning reading instruction.(10) He found that girls attended significantly more than boys and were also better at the end of a month on word recognition. On the basis of this result he recommends that the boys undergo some form of behavior modification to increase their attending behavior. In other words, change the boys to fit the system. The alternative of changing the materials to the boys interest, or delaying this particular form of instruction for boys till a later age, would be changing the system to suit the child. This would mean attention to preferred modes of information processing and social participation. An example of fitting the system to the child is suggested by Susan Phillip's excellent analysis of the Indian child's culture shock in the typical classroom.(8) She observed that the Indian child is an intense visual observer who prefers much private rehearsal until competence is achieved and *then* public performance. Our typical classroom provides for little quiet visual observation and private rehearsal before public response but insists on immediate response which can equal quick public failure at exposure. A teaching strategy which allows private rehearsal or two peers-together-rehearsal rather than immediate public performance would be helpful to the learning and confidence of the Indian child, and others as well.

So to summarize how to proceed:

1) with respect and utilization of the child's culture and language and learning style
2) with awareness that language and thought are not the same
3) with as wide a variety of approaches as possible to meet individual differences and interest.

Some Disturbing Current Trends:

We are seeing earlier and earlier imposition of skill learning on young children, thus bringing the divorce between the teaching of reading and the enjoyment of literature to more tender and vulnerable populations. This type of divorce is

heartbreaking at any age but especially so in the early ages. People who are terribly anxious about a problem are not always in the best position to think clearly about finding solutions. As a culture, because of funding of programs being tied to reading scores, we seem terribly anxious about reading so that we do things about it that aren't always logical; e.g., starting skills earlier and earlier, when what we perhaps ought to be doing is priming children to want to become autonomous in enjoyment of books. (Sometimes I think it is very much as if we were anxious that every girl be married and so saw to it that she married at age 10 before she can really develop any motivation and taste for the thing). . . .

A while back, Jean Chall came out with a book called *Reading: The Great Debate*. In it she reviewed a great deal of research on reading and two interesting facts were brought out: 1) children who had been read to consistently by their parents, usually on a lap before bedtime and daily, were among those who either came to school already having picked it up informally or who showed high reading success in school; 2) successful readers in first grade were children who knew the alphabet by the end of kindergarten. It is fascinating, isn't it, that nowhere that I know of in this vast country is there a program where children are read to on a one to one basis consistently in a school. But we are seeing lots of alphabet teaching in kindergarten.

Niedermeyer describes a recent SWRL program of this type in which every kindergartner spends 25 minutes every day tracing and copying letters or numerals or writing them as the teacher dictates.(7) For the child lacking in the language of books, no matter his color or ethnicity, this kind of reading preparation is ritualistic and unrelated to the eventual task of finding meaning and enjoyment in books. Twenty-five minutes a day spent on some consistently available and admired adult's lap while having a snack, etc., really might be more appropriate to the heart of the matter than the pursuit of the alphabet. What apparently has not occurred to the alphabet supporters is that the finding Chall stresses about successful readers knowing the alphabet may rest on a related context variable: the fact that the alphabet, along with the notion that print is meaningful, was learned in the process of

being read to by an adult. There is of course no question that a massive program of adults reading to very young children would involve some creative reorganization on the part of schools, people, schedules, and new kinds of personnel, while necessitating some re-evaluation of teacher role and effort in teaching beginning reading. But perhaps it is just this kind of creative change that could be effective in making academic learning a meaningful, effective experience for many children whose affective interest in intellectual pursuits is stillborn in the school room. Often this child, so cold to ideas in print, is a product of the divorce between reading and language arts, where reading is perceived as skills and work, and language arts is perceived as less important peripheral fun, stripped of serious daily investments which could feed the child's drive to competency. It is by uniting *his* thoughts with words, printed for him and by him, and playing out and relating the words of others meaningful to him, that the child of this divorce may become whole and an avid reader. And perhaps equally as important in this kind of learning process, the child, no matter who he is, is not denied his childhood needs and interests. Such an approach uses the life of the child to write and read about and includes the life of his dual cultural membership.

In closing, I would like to caution against the trends for earlier and earlier imposition of skill drills on young children.

John Goodlad, in his recent survey *Early Schooling in America*, discussing observations made on the basis of over 350 schools says:

> "We must not by-pass essential elements of development of the whole child in an effort to compensate for handicap or disadvantage. His early striving for identity in formative years is most crucial and what is essential in this development are never failing adult support and a set of guiding values that infuse every activity. These values are that the child achieve a sense of personal well being expressed in his confident relationships with objects, peers and adults; his lack of fear, his confrontations with his occasionally angry self-hating, anti-social self; his ability to move in and out of an imaginary world and transition from narcissistic contemplation of self to interaction with increasingly

expanding environment. These are the marks of the child successfully using his early years—not his level of performance on school oriented tests." (5)

So, in compensatory programs with young children, let's keep in mind that teaching to tests robs the culturally different child of intellectually challenging experience and his right to full and undistorted early child development. The real danger in this approach may be that in ignoring the child's culture and introducing him to the extremely limited school culture of what needs to be known to pass tests, the school becomes the systematic instrument of depriving him of the motivation to learn and to experience the culture beyond.

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Linguistic Competence and Writing Conventions

J. Donald Bowen

In the welter of confusion among experts of the central and peripheral fields of reading, and in the presence of inescapable problems and inadequate remedies, I suggest that reading is primarily a combination of the mastery of two kinds of knowledge:

1) Linguistic competence
2) Representational conventions

The first seems self-evident. A person can be expected to read only in a language he knows. Meanings don't flow directly from visual language symbols to the mind of the beholder. They are processed through the language and experience of the human interpreter. The second is likewise reasonable; two-dimensional symbols of writing must be correlated with the unidimensional symbols of speech in a way that the intelligent reader or writer can move easily from one medium to the other. The fact that both speech and writing symbols are essentially arbitrary doesn't alter the necessity of correlation.

It is not difficult to illustrate the essential nature of the competence-convention correlations. Note the following text:

spnds ʃo dip ɹɐoM ɜuo MOM sıʜ pnɒ

uɜxo pıdısuı ɹnoʃ pɒɒ sıʜ plos ɜʜ

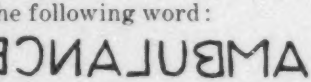
sMoʜs ul sWIMS oʜM pıdnɔ pɒs ɜuo

sɒʜ pun s|opı MɒʜS xIS sumo phoq

Some of the words can be given a pronunciation, but many are strange to English experience. Yet they would have been quite meaningful to the aunt of a friend of mine who learned to read sitting at her mother's knee while her mother read to her. The little girl learned to follow while she listened, with

no other formal instruction. When she went to school her teacher was well pleased that she knew how to read so fluently, until in horror she noticed the little girl held her book upside down. The teacher promptly turned it right-side up and the little girl could no longer interpret the written page. The above text, turned over, is not an example of reading fascination, but is interpretable. If a person has competence in English and can recognize the conventions, he can read.

If one is observant on the streets of a large city these days, he may see the following word:



Are we being asked to change one of our most sacred conventions, that of writing left to right, and learn the backwards pattern of Arabic or Hebrew? No, just the opposite; our convention is being protected, so we will be able to react normally in a moment of stress when a siren could be either a police car or a hospital vehicle.

One additional example illustrates another of our conventions, an example of something called boustrophedonic writing, once common in the oldest Greek inscriptions and in epigraphic South Arabic:

> One way to write is to
> fo pot eht morf trats
> the page and go from
> ssorca thgir ot tfel
> the paper, then move
> morf kcab og dna nwod
> right to left, in this
> eht gnitanretla rennam
> direction of each line.

Alternate lines are easy and difficult to interpret. This type of writing is named for the pattern of an ox plowing a field. It might be handy for a stonecutter who doesn't want to move his scaffold any oftener than necessary, but most of us are willing to put up with the inconvenience of an eye regression for each new line. One wonders if it would ever be possible to learn to skim a boustrophedon for the main points.

Look at another sample:

FQOVB	TRKUZ	YKDAX	QHLIW	JPWAF
NBTIK	YSMFJ	LCOXM	KMBZF	ARYLS
RGOXP	SJHKA	VXDEA	GTLAZ	ENJPW

This is an example of writing that follows the conventions of a message in cipher. It can be read aloud only by calling out the names of the individual letters: eff, cue, oh, vee, bee, etc. It could carry meaning if properly encoded by a prearranged cipher key, but in the present case it was not. It's simply a series of randomly chosen letters arranged in groups of five.

Here's another example, following the same special conventions:

IWOUL	DREAL	LYLIK	ETOMA	KEASU
GGEST	IONAB	OUTTH	EWAYT	HISME
ETING	ISBEI	NGCON	DUCTE	DZPLA

This message is not in code but is rather difficult to read, because it follows a cipher convention that we don't ordinarily use. Still the message is there for a reader who has competence in English. But oral interpretation tends to be very choppy, as words are recognized one at a time. It is difficult to group words into meaningful phrase patterns.

An example following another convention is:

IUUENISIOUISHOCFECIT

This line has a valid message. The convention that makes it difficult is the lack of spaces between words. But it's still difficult, unless you have competence in Latin, in which case you might be familiar with another convention foreign to modern English—the practice of not distinguishing between I and J or between U and V. The message can be translated: Jove's young man did this.

Another message in Latin, a poem, but this time inserting spaces between words:

O SEBILLE SE ERGO
FORTIBUS ES
ENERO
O NOBILLE THEMIS TRUX
SEWATS INEM
CAUSEN DUX

But a Latin speaker would have trouble abstracting the meaning, unless he also knew modern English. He might be able to call out word pronunciations—the way Rudolph Flesch bragged about reading Czech (6, p. 23)—and if he is skillful at such mouthing (as young reading students occasionally are), he *might* be understood, even though he doesn't know what he is saying. [My reading is: Oh see Billy, see her go; forty buses in a row. Oh no Billy, them is trucks; see what's in them: cows and ducks.]

A French speaker might in like manner interpret the following advice:

Pas du leur Rhone que nous.

He too would have to know English to extract a meaning. The words are French, but they do not carry a message in French. But for the English listener, a reasonably skilled mouthing produces: Paddle your own canoe.

Another example, in Spanish, is different in that Spanish word spellings are produced only by chance. It is a Spanish speller's interpretation of what he heard, a kind of "phonetic transcription" following the conventions of Spanish orthography:

iu en ai ar tu ian tu no

Again linguistic competence (in English) is insufficient to form an interpretation without a corresponding knowledge of the conventions of Spanish. Conversely, a Spanish speaker could possibly produce an oral rendition that would be recognizable by a versatile English-competent listener, but the Spaniard, lacking competence, could not meaningfully read the message: You and I are too young to know.

The point of these somewhat frivolous examples is to emphasize the two basic skills or conditions without which reading is impossible: competence in the language and a working familiarity with the conventions. These two conditions are certainly necessary, though they may not be sufficient, for successfully teaching reading skills. Other quite essential requirements may be: need (or as the psychologists say, motivation) and a certain kind of basic ability. Lefevre insists, however, that the ability is not intelligence, that indeed we don't know what it is: "Reading ability does not

correlate reliably with intelligence, or indeed with any other measurable human trait." (10, p. xviii). If this is true, we need to encourage every line of research that holds any promise of light on the subject.

It seems strange that there is so much variation in the ability to learn to read. I have mentioned the aunt of an acquaintance who learned to read merely by simultaneous exposure to the spoken and written form of a text, even when the written text was upside down. Another friend of mine learned to read forty or so years ago by following the comic strips while Uncle Ben read them over the radio. At the other end of the spectrum there are children given every chance to learn to read—glossy, well-illustrated texts, years of instruction, special remedial programs with extensive individual attention, the concern of large and well-financed school systems, specially-trained teachers, a growing accumulation of theoretical and experimental studies, etc.—and there still is a distressing proportion of failure.

How can we explain this? Possibly one reason is that the content of the reading material we offer students does not reflect their interests or capture their imagination. I recall several years ago, when I was living in the Philippines, that comic books sold new for fifty centavos. There was a healthy second-hand market in which used comic books brought 40 or 45 centavos—80 to 90 percent of the original price. Compare this retention of value with that of the glossy imported textbooks, which had a trade-back value of around thirty percent, if the book was to be used as a text the next year. Perhaps we should be a bit chagrined at the fact the pulp authors and publishers produce a more appealing product than our curriculum experts. We have failed to stimulate reading by producing dull materials of the Dick and Jane variety. That era seems to be over, its demise sealed by the new ethnic consciousness. But are we doing any better with the replacement series, with their carefully balanced ratios of black, white, brown, red, etc.? Or is our social conscience dictating a new set of writer's guidelines rather than encouraging talented authors to produce quality literature? Perhaps we should ask Dr. Seuss to write our basal readers.

We have discussed several of the conventions that one

must master in order to read, such as the basic fact of graphic representation of sounds (and ideas), the use of letters or graphemes, right-to-left and top-to-bottom orientation, spacing between words, and the importance of groupings. Other conventions could be mentioned, such as the contrast of upper and lower case letter forms, cursive forms, italics and boldface, punctuation, diacritics, columns and indentation, hyphenation and syllable division, etc. All of these can be different in different languages, and for the student who has developed reading skills in one language, transferring those skills to another may be facilitated by a comparison of the systems that shows just what features and patterns have to be changed or adapted.

As with conventions, acquiring competence is probably a different matter in first vs. second languages, but both share one feature: the fact that written language tends to use styles and forms uncommon in spoken language.

Several scholars make the point that while reading is a receptive skill, it is not at all a passive skill. The reader doesn't just accept what the author has to say, he follows along making predictions at each step, some of which turn out as he expected, others of which have to be rectified.

Let's illustrate this process with what could be called a reader's grammar. If we begin to read "They set the . . ." we limit our expectation of the next concept to a group of possibilities that may include "thermostat, clock, table, trap, jewel, bone, eggs" or maybe "departure, price, example." It would probably exclude the intransitively associated concepts "sun, moon, jello." If the sentence continues ". . . clock and put the . . ." we can run ahead and try "book away, cat outside, lights out, food in the refrigerator," attempting to anticipate an activity that might consistently accompany setting a clock. With the verb *put* we expect both an object and a locative complement, because you can't just *put* something; you have to put it somewhere. We read on ". . . lights out before going to bed, but they . . ." The adversative *but* indicates that the continuation has to be something that normally doesn't follow setting the clock and extinguishing the lights. We can try "just sat there in the dark, weren't able to drop off to sleep, kept thinking of things they should have done."

But the sentence ends ". . . always forget to lock the door." Only then is a present-tense interpretation imposed on the earlier forms *set* and *put*, as the verb *forget* prompts us to realize a regular or habitual series of events is being reported. It is apparent that the reader is actively and creatively involved as he reads.

Understandably a rich background of experience and competence in the use of the language facilitates this kind of on-line processing. It is instructive to note that although second-language users of English read at significantly lower rates than comparably educated first-language speakers, it is not because of more regressions to re-read, or because their eye-span takes in fewer words (all of us have a measured and calculated span of 1.11 words per fixation), but because of significantly longer durations of the fixations, which seems to indicate an overload on short-term memory. (11, pp. 76-78)

Contextual clues are crucial in making correct associations. In the two sentences "The house stood by the side of the road" and "The horse stood by the side of the road" the minimal distinction of *u* and *r* in *house/horse* determines not only the referent of the noun, but the meaning of the verb *stood*. For the house it's a description of permanent location, for the horse it's a casual placement. Even the exact referential meaning of the phrase "at the side of" will depend on whether *r* or *u* occurs. The ability to retrace one's steps and enter a correction is very likely an important element of aptitude for developing good reading skills.

For the second-language speaker, or for the first-language speaker with severely restricted experience, versatility in handling and processing syntactic structures is difficult enough, but reading material customarily employs a much wider range of structures than does unelaborated oral communication. Written style includes more examples of "ellipsis, complex noun phrases, relative clause and participial modifiers, and cleft and pseudo-cleft inversions. (12, p. 403) To handle these unfamiliar constructions a special kind of visual syntax is needed.

Virginia Allen has some excellent suggestions for activities that will help develop reading skills. (1, p. 15-17) With

reference to the expanded competence necessary to handle the elaborated syntactic constructions typical of the written language, she devises exercises that utilize special techniques to handle expectancy, redundancy, sequence symbols, and ambiguity. Her activities involve various applications of paraphrase, a device whereby semantic content is held as a constant, while grammar and lexicon vary, which in my opinion may be the most powerful tool in the arsenal of the second-language teacher.

Oral reading is frequently employed as a device to encourage the association of the spoken and written forms of language. Saville-Troike suggests that there may be limits to the effectiveness of this practice, that for a struggling reader it may even inhibit rather than advance effective reading skills. A student may gain no useful advantage by stumbling along orally, or indeed by listening to inaccurate peer models. She suggests limiting this activity to testing purposes. Listening while looking, however, i.e. following the printed version while the teacher reads the selection aloud, may be a useful way to reinforce correct phrasing, stress patterns, stress-signaled associations, etc. And it's an excellent activity to assign as a language laboratory exercise. (12, pp. 400-401)

Assuming that a particular group of students has the necessary minimum of linguistic competence, an appropriate presentation of the conventions of writing, good materials that supply proper motivation, what else is needed to help assure the success of a reading program? The next ingredient is deceptively simple: the opportunity to read. Very often the reading classes I visit are doing almost everything except reading. Students are involved in readiness, motivation, preparation, discussion of plot, action, characterization, vocabulary study, checking, evaluating, etc. In the Philippines there was an expression for all this assistance to the students: unlocking the difficulties. But student interest seemed to be dissipated by this intense manipulation. I remember the deadly, wearisome "book reports" that were exacted (as proof of reading, I suppose) in my own student days in high school. They made a drudgery of reading. Why not more reading for pleasure rather than to satisfy a pedagogical procedure.

A close Chicano friend of mine recalls that he was on the

verge of becoming a high-school dropout when a sensitive English teacher handed him a book in Spanish and asked, "José, I need to know what's in this book, but I can't read Spanish. Could you read it for me and tell me what it says? I'd be most grateful for the help." This proved to be a critical point in his life. He stayed in school, learned to enjoy reading, went on to higher education and teaching, eventually completed a Ph.D. program. Today he's an assistant dean of students at a large state university, with rich prospects for further success.

José's experience suggests the solution of bilingual education for second-language students of English in the United States. A few years ago I looked with confidence at the possibilities of bilingual education, but I must admit now I am disturbed by the fact it has become a political issue, and I fear that educational considerations are being overshadowed. Politicians have a very bad track record as curriculum experts, and political motivations are not always compatible with sound educational planning. (Does anyone remember the Casey Bill, which mandated foreign-language instruction for all California students in grades six, seven, and eight?) I fear that legislative mandate for bilingual education may be the kiss of death for still another potentially good program.

Possibly teaching reading initially in a student's first language is a good thing. The best evidence we have, however, indicates that the language of instruction is not really a linguistic problem. (9) Children in favorable circumstances have no difficulty learning, or learning to read, in a language other than the one they learned at home. If reading (or other educational) problems are really due to social or psychological causes, then overreliance on bilingual education or any other nostrum will have the effect of just postponing the day when we realize that the choice of languages is not crucial, that a real solution lies in the society more than in the schools.

In my opinion the really critical factor that determines success in a reading program is the quality of the relationship that exists between the teacher and the student. And I deliberately use the word student in the singular form, because the relation must be established individually for every student. Students respond more readily and more effectively to a

sympathetic and interested teacher than to materials, approaches, techniques, strategies, procedures—no matter how professionally conceived and presented.

In summary, I would list the ingredients of a successful reading program as follows.

The prerequisites:

1) Linguistic competence in the language to be read.

2) Familiarity with the specific conventions of graphic representation.

The corequisites:

1) Attractive, high-quality reading materials, appropriately selected and classified for maturational and educational level.

2) Relevant practice in an atmosphere and context of reading for pleasure and satisfaction.

3) An authentically professional teacher, fulfilling the role of guide, counselor, and friend.

The last may be the most important.

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An Abstract of Differences between Written and Spoken Languages

Mary Ritchie Key

The elements used in *direct communication* which constitute a syntactic language are: 1) language 2) paralanguage 3) kinesics. Writing is a surrogate which, unlike some surrogates, does not provide for feedback, and lacks the supporting elements of paralanguage and kinesics. The lack of these missing elements effects changes in linguistic structures at all levels. Also of consideration are vocabulary choice, redundancy, and ambiguity. Linguistic structures constitute Non-fluencies (with cross-reference to paralinguistics); Phonological, Grammatical, and Semantic Structures. A large proportion of Non-fluencies such as false starts, repetitions, lapses, fragments, and hesitations occur in spoken language. "Meaningless" phrases such as 'I mean . . .' 'you see . . .' do not occur in written language, unless in dialogue meant to simulate conversation. Spoken language permits wide differences in phonetic articulation with much deletion, and phonological change such as palatalization: 'Dwanna pucha books 'ere?' versus 'Do you want to put your books here?' 'ten tə four' versus 'ten till/to [?] four'. Word order and phrase order change in written and spoken varieties: 'In the park the children ran and played.' 'That sounds have been studied since early history is a well-known fact.' 'To make the team he practiced every day.' Where spoken language uses intonation to signal emphasis, written language may change word order. 'Is *shouting* necessary?' becomes 'Is it necessary to shout?' There is considerable grammatical deletion in spoken language: 'You [had] better go.' Some expressions simply never occur in written language except in novels: 'Now take your European examples . . .' 'Then you have . . .' 'We had a neighbor's house burn down . . .' Fewer adjectives occur in speaking than in writing. Paralanguage has to be overtly indicated. 'Said' becomes: 'pleaded, whispered, cooed, groaned, exclaimed, whimpered, yelled . . .' Body language also has to be explicitly described: 'sauntered, shrugged, smiled, pointed,

shuffled . . .' In spoken language some sentences are completed with a gesture or paralinguistic effect. This may occur in situations of emotion or taboo, or difficult to explain (a spiral), or a desire to communicate more colorfully. Examples used in present-day linguistic discussions to verify grammaticality should be examined in the light of written/spoken differences. It is likely that some of these structures do not occur in spoken language and have been fabricated in much the same way that poetic phrases and oratorical turns of the phrase have been devised. This is another kind of grammar and could be designated so by a transformational rule such as "T-Written" or a feature [+ Written] that would identify these structures for what they are.

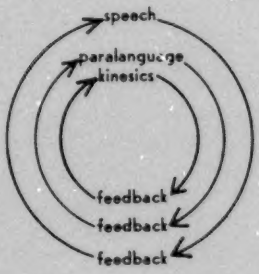
(See chart on following page.)

COMMUNICATION

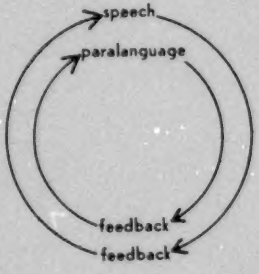
Channels: acoustical, optical, tactual, chemical, electrical.

face-to-face

chemical
tactual

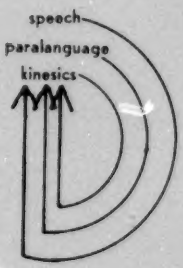


telephone



radio/tape-recorder

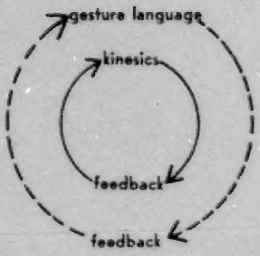
TV



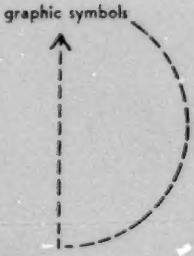
SURROGATES:

sign language (deaf, Indian, guard at the beach)

tactual



writing



Diverse Aspects of Language Development As Related to Reading

Alice Paul

All of us, at one time or another, have found ourselves at a "loss for words." The situation or setting has made it difficult to clearly verbalize some inner feeling or thought. Sometimes words alone cannot express our true communication. Our listener or receiver then becomes influenced by our intonations, gestures and facial expressions. Young children also have similar experiences when an adult's request or demand is outside his level of operation or experience. Too often in our eagerness to "teach" children, we have moved too quickly out of the realm of the child's world of experience. We become product rather than process oriented.

If we accept the role of helping children to become competent and productive adults, then part of our responsibility lies in helping each child develop his language as a principal tool for thinking and communication. However, we must also consider the motivational aspects of learning. We want to maintain an eagerness for learning and a feeling of "I canness" in each child. The interrelatedness of intellectual and cognitive skills and the social skills then become part of the process. Ilse Mattick(1) in an article discussing the teacher's role in developing language competency states

> "there is an interdependence between cognitive and affective development and that the growth of intellectual functioning, such as the acquisition and organization of information, the ability to solve problems and to engage in symbolic representation cannot be divorced from interpersonal and intrapersonal growth processes. From this follows that the ability to relate to others goes hand in hand with *talking* to others and that the development of self-esteem, self-assertion, self-confidence and self-control are inextricably intertwined with growth in cognitive functioning and thus with competency in communication."

How then in the classroom can we become more effective in meeting children's needs through language development? What is our professional responsibility?

Learning Environment

Basic to any classroom is its organization, which should provide a rich learning environment—an environment which reflects not only a variety of materials but also a variety of behavioral settings. Both should be flexible to allow the child to explore independently as well as in small groups. The environmental settings should offer options and stimulate language. Language must be practiced to be mastered. Developing language in a relevant setting is much more meaningful. A teacher must set up situations in which children can practice. If language is natural for the activity, it gives a reason for talking.

The settings must also take into account not only the rates, but also the styles of learning and levels of operation of individual children.

View of the Child

When we keep all of the above considerations in mind in organizing the classroom, then we are also saying we view children as unique individuals: that we accept him for who he is, where he comes from, and what he brings with him. That he has the potential to learn and develop his uniqueness. We see the child as a learner and being the adult, we are the facilitator in his learning process.

View of Schooling

If we examine our view of the child, can we not also examine the role of school? Is it possible to conceive of a school that is not concerned primarily with having the child fit any particular mold or having all children achieve the same aims? Isn't it possible to conceive of schooling as a partnership with children? Even shoe stores are at times more accommodating to our children than schools. There are all sizes, styles, colors, and prices available from which a customer can choose. There is nothing more uncomfortable than a pair of ill-fitting shoes. They can cause us to hurt, limp and even leave scars, corns, and bunions. Yet, we have time and again literally forced children to feel 'pinched' and scarred if they do not fit the mold of schooling. Bernard Spodek(2) suggests that as an alternative model for schooling we could develop a

model that he has labeled the " 'transactional curriculum,' a curriculum determined for each child through the transactions between the child, as client, and the teacher, as professional." He goes on to say that

> "the teacher's role as a professional would be to set the stage for learning, to provide legitimate alternatives for children's activities in school, and to serve a guidance function in the classroom. The teacher would provide alternative goals, help children clarify their needs and desires, help them anticipate the consequences of their acts, help them evaluate their activities, and help to see that school provides productive learning situations for all children."

View of the Teaching Role

Basic to teaching is the acceptance of the teaching role. Our commitment is to help move children forward from where they are and not from where we wish they were or think they should be. How many times have you or I spent time trying to explain why a child can't perform at a so-called grade level? It is the teacher's responsibility to observe, interact and evaluate with each child what he is ready to learn, then make it possible for him to learn it. As part of the teaching role one must not only accept each child, we must also convey an expectation to each child. We must convey to the child the idea that we know he can perform and that we will accept his efforts. A teacher should reflect to a child his "best self."

Reinforcement and support are part of the foundation for learning. In reinforcing children, the more specific we can be in identifying desired behaviors the more cues we give to children for their expected behaviors. Too often we emphasize what we don't want rather than giving our attention to approximations and appropriate behaviors.

The teacher acts as a model of language. She sets the stage that provides opportunities for children to use their language in many situations. She knows it is the children who need practice for language to develop and consequently provides many meaningful activities and experiences for children to talk about.

The teacher must become a conscious modeler who is systematic in her feedback to children. Arline Hobson(3)

discusses in detail corrective feedback vs. correction when responding to children. She lists several levels of corrective feedback, such as helping children when they omit functors in their initial attempts to systematize language. Corrective feedback can be used to provide necessary labels for a child's widening language world. Proper word order modeled by the teacher is basic in establishing English syntax. As adults we have many opportunities to provide this kind of interaction rather than spending the time reprimanding for "incorrect" speech. Corrective feedback can assist the adult in helping a child discover more appropriate vocabulary in a particular setting.

How we make a child feel as he is trying to make order out of language learning is crucial. It becomes even more crucial when our responsibility includes helping children who come to us with a language other than English. As Creber (4) states, "The teacher's knowledge of the child's . . . culture, family life and language (structure) is likely to remain sterile unless informed by feeling and imagination." It has long been assumed that language use could be effected by instruction alone. Language development has consequently been isolated from other aspects of personal and social behavior and development.

Learning to read is an extension of language. It is a skill that becomes a communication tool. Frank Smith (5) emphasizes that "many of the skills employed by a child in learning about speech are also relevant to the task of learning to read." As we all know, a child's language development precedes his learning to read.

Language is part of our daily living and the child's language emerges from daily experiences. As teachers we can't help him develop his full potential without respecting this fact and without basing school experiences upon the child's perceptions of his world.

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Syntactic Characteristics of Selected Bilingual Children

Patricia D. Van Metre

THE PROBLEM

Many bilingual Spanish-English-speaking school children in the Southwest have difficulty in school with language-based skills and processes. Often their writing appears less sophisticated than does the writing of the average monolingual English-speaking child, reading test scores for groups of bilingual children are often low, their total school achievement may be affected by language problems, and high dropout rates for bilingual students may reflect language-related learning problems.

The question of why many of these children have difficulty mastering two languages, while thousands of children in various parts of the world learn two or more languages without difficulty (often before they enter school) is left unresolved, in spite of a continued search for answers through sociological, economic, psychological, linguistic, and even nutritional research and conjecture.

Perhaps the important question of "why" many Spanish-English-speaking children encounter language difficulties in school should be preceded by the question of "what" language differences exist between bilingual and monolingual children, and between bilingual children who are achieving well in school and those who are not.

Often teachers are told that bilingual Spanish-English-speaking children are "linguistically different" from monolingual English-speaking children. Such a description is not helpful to the classroom teacher who is seeking to assist children. He must know specifically in what ways bilingual children are "linguistically different" and what, if anything, to do about defined differences.

The research described here was motivated by an intent to identify some linguistic differences of bilingual children which might have applicability to classroom practice. The importance of syntax as a crucial element in language growth

of children directed the investigation to grammatic differences rather than to phonological or semantic variations.

Syntax is the system of principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in a particular language (1). Clearly, there are operating in each child's and each teacher's world numerous influences other than syntax; however, an investigation of that complex subsystem of language may give educators an indication of some things which can be done on "Monday morning in the classroom," for any child, but particularly for the bilingual child.

THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research was to describe selected syntactic characteristics of bilingual (Spanish-English-speaking) third grade children in two groups which had scored at widely different levels in measured reading achievement.

Throughout this paper, reference to "bilingual child" is to the school child in whose home two languages are spoken (one of which is English) or in whose home only Spanish is spoken while English is encountered outside of the home. In other words, the "bilingual child," for purposes of this paper, is the child who is dealing or attempting to deal with two oral language systems in some capacity in his life.

Chosen for research subjects were bilingual children who scored in the top and bottom one-fourth of their schools' scores on a state-mandated (Arizona) reading test, the reading section of the Metropolitan Achievement Test (2).

All of the children selected were metropolitan third graders in the age range of eight years-six months through nine years-eight months and had no special problems such as emotional disturbance, sensory disability, physical illness, speech defect, or identified learning disability. They all fell within the average IQ range established by the predominantly nonverbal *Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence Test*, Primary Battery (3). The annual income of the family of each child was between $4,000 and $10,000; all but one child had a Spanish surname, and the father and mother were in each home.

In short, every effort was made to eliminate variables which might interfere with the language measurement goals of the study. Furthermore, the children in the two groups

were matched as closely as possible in regard to these same criteria.

Children in the group which had scored in the top one-fourth of the reading scores were designated Bilingual-High, while those in the group which had scored in the bottom one-fourth were designated Bilingual-Low.

For a comparative investigation, two monolingual English-speaking groups of children were also selected from the same schools by applying the same criteria, except the criteria of bilingualism and Spanish surname. There were, thus, four matched groups of children in the study, eight in each group: the Bilingual-High (BH), the Bilingual-Low (BL), the Monolingual-High (MH), and the Monolingual-Law (ML). Four boys and four girls were in each group.

To measure knowledge of syntax, an interview technique developed by Carol Chomsky of Harvard University was selected because it requires little language production from the children, because it had been used with success with children ages five to ten, because it differentiated hierarchies of complexity within selected syntactic structures, and because it looked as if it would be fun for children (4). It was.

A detailed description of the linguistic rationale underlying the syntactic constructions investigated and of the interview techniques themeslves can be found in the original Chomsky (4) and Van Metre (5) studies.

The four syntactic constructions investigated were concerned with:

1. Interpretation of the words "ask" and "tell" and interpretation of "ask-question" sentences which violate the general principle of minimal distance for determination of the implicit subject of a complement verb.

Example: Ask/tell George what color to make the triangle.

2. Interpretation of "promise" sentences which violate the general principle of minimal distance for determination of the implicit subject of a complement verb.

Example: Charlie promises/tells Snoopy to do a somersault.

3. Interpretation of syntactically complex sentences in

which the underlying relationships are not expressed in the surface structure.

Example: Is Snoopy easy to see or hard to see?

4. Interpretation of restricted pronominal reference to nonidentity.

Example: He didn't know why Linus felt so sad.

FINDINGS

Findings of the four interviews can be summarized as follows:

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF FOUR INTERVIEWS

Groups Compared	INTERVIEWS: I Ask-q/Tell	II Promise/ Tell	III Easy to See	IV Pronominalization
BH-BL	difference established	difference established	no difference	difference established
MH-ML	difference established	difference established	difference established	difference established
BH-MH	no difference	no difference	no difference	no difference
BL-ML	no difference	difference established	no difference	no difference

Statistical difference was established beyond the .05 level for three of the four constructions studied when the bilingual children who performed well on the reading test (BH) were compared with the bilingual children who performed poorly on that test (BL). The BH group scored significantly better. Although the comparison of distributional data for the Easy to See interview did not yield a statistical difference between the two groups, the figures seemed sufficiently divergent to indicate developmental differences.

The monolingual children who scored high on the reading test (MH) scored significantly higher on all four interviews than did the monolingual children who scored low on the reading test (ML).

There were no statistical differences established between

the interview performances of the bilingual and the monolingual children who scored high on the reading test (BH and MH). There were no statistical differences established between the two groups (bilingual and monolingual) who scored low on the reading test (BL and ML), except on the Promise/Tell interview on which the bilingual children scored higher.

The reader will remember that a search for the "linguistic differences" between bilingual children and monolingual children and the differences between bilingual children who achieved well in school and those who achieved poorly, motivated this study. Language differences based on the constructions studied were established between children in the high and those in the low groups, whether the children were monolingual or bilingual. However, bilingual and monolingual children who were doing well in school scored with no difference. The children, bilingual and monolingual, who scored low on the reading test scored with little difference on the syntactic constructions investigated.

At no time could any qualitative differences in the answers given by monolingual and bilingual children in response to the test items be discerned. *If children were developing at a slower rate linguistically, they appeared to be developing in the same manner, whether they were bilingual or monolingual.*

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of this study, Chomsky's(4), and others, what statements can be made about the language development of children, monolingual and bilingual? It should first be noted that all statements must be guardedly made and carefully qualified, since much of the research is seminal, since study groups have been small, and since the constructions investigated have been few in number.

It does seem apparent, however, that (a) children develop certain syntactic structures at radically different rates; (b) knowledge of syntax plays a role in understanding the meaning of language; (c) knowledge of syntax plays a role in the reading process—probably in the predictive skills of reconstructing print into primary language, as well as in comprehension; and (d) children who are doing well in reading

know more complex syntactic structures of English than do children who are not doing well in reading.

If the findings of the present study are representative of the broad population, a slower rate of language development rather than some undefined "linguistic differences" may explain the language status of some bilingual children. Bilingual "low" children are apparently using the language syntactically (as measured in this study) in the same ways as monolingual "low" children; the difference is that there are proportionately more bilingual children who may be learning English at a slower rate.

We are led in a circle back to the question of why language might develop at a slower rate for these children. Among the possible explanations is one related to the particular way in which many of the bilingual children in the Southwest learn two languages.

One might posit that at times in Southwestern communities the two languages being learned by the small child are not clearly differentiated for him, since he may hear both languages spoken by the same adults in his home, and sometimes the two languages are mixed in form. Such mixture is an anticipated phenomenon resulting from the collision of two languages, but for the child first learning language and having no concept of "language" in the formal sense, his linguistic input may seem to him to be one complex system which he must process.

Further research into comparative bilingual language-learning environments is suggested by this hypothesis.

CLASSROOM APPLICATION

From the research findings that children learn some syntactic structures at radically different rates follows the most obvious implication of the research for the classroom: that while children should be presented with a rich and varied linguistic input, a wide range of children's responses (language production) should be accepted and respected in order to allow for expected differences in language ability.

Furthermore, schools might play an important role in differentiating for the child the two languages which he is processing by presenting one or both languages in standard

form and in unmixed form. Perhaps each adult in the classroom should speak only one language to the young child, English *or* Spanish, so that he is assisted in his perceptions of the two language systems.

Also emanating from the research is emphasis on the essential understanding that language is a confluence of form and meaning. In the classroom the teacher can implement this language principle by seeking intrinsically vital learning situations as the motivating carriers of vivid meaning with which to accompany language and concept building.

The question of whether language development *can* be accelerated for bilingual children is crucial to the classroom application of recent research findings. The answer to that question must be sought through immediate intensive investigation if thousands of bilingual children are not to be needlessly penalized for a lifetime for not having learned English at a faster rate as young, preschool children, when, in fact, they were attempting to master two languages, perhaps under circumstances not ideally conducive to processing two language systems.

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Discovering Thinking by Listening to Language

John Regan

Clues to the beginning of thought lie in the natural conversation of children. So it is that in ordinary daily events teachers and parents encounter the workings of mind and language. Respect is the first step in understanding the child's experiments with thought and logic. Although thought is a complex human activity, its beginning is simple—and interesting to explore. Then language comes along adding its personality. The following describes the working together of thought and language in the early years. The first illustrations describe an adult discovering unexpectedly the thought of a child. Then follows a closer look at the beginning of words and ideas.

The windshield wiper of our new car had a simple innovation, a side switch which increased the wiper's speed. Two Roman numerals, "I" and "II" under each other, marked the alternative actions.

I explored this convenience when the first rain of the season began as Steven watched interestedly. He was used to the personality of the old car which included, among its other foibles, a dull, sluggish movement of windshield wipers punctuated by unpredictable and violent back and forth swoopings.

He wanted to know what made, at just the right moments, the even acceleration.

"There's a switch with 'one' and 'two' marked on it," I replied.

"Let me see," he said.

So I pointed to the numerals.

"Which is the fast one?" he asked immediately.

"The 'I'—no, the 'II'—let me think," I said hesitating. All I knew was that if I wanted faster or slower wipers, I flicked the switch in the other direction. I suspected "I" was the slower, "II" the faster. That fitted my expectations; trying it I discovered I was right.

I told Steven, "II is the faster." But that didn't add up in his system.

"One should be," he said.

"Why?" I asked, still puzzled myself.

"*One* is more important than two. Being first is better than second," he said.

I thought about that—the faster runner does come in first. It was reasonable for a child to list his priorities in this way—with the *one* on top. And that was what Steven was trying to do—to sort priorities and to experiment with hierarchies. He was working out the order of things, exploring the structures in the world. Language helped that exploring.

At first I had not been clear which was the faster but Steven was. Why was I unsure? And why was he sure? I was sorting out two groups of meanings that were held in my adult mind.

— "one" means "first" and it also means the "faster,"
— "one" can also mean second, or, said differently, "slower."

The electric drill, the kitchen mixer switches followed the second meaning. On them the "I" switch was the slower. I checked other applicances and found the same applied to them also. "One" meant the slower, two the next faster. That was the opposite meaning from Steven's.

Steven, however, was not used to this sort of ambiguity especially with "one," "two"—number words in his thought meant exactly what they said. That is what his experience told him.

But he was wrong; opposite meanings can be attached to one word and words can have different meanings. That fact is at the heart of problem solving. Words, as well as things, can have more than one job. Experience would help him understand this important fact. Right now I would tell him and show him directly.

A second grader came up to me one day when I was helping in a local school. She had a problem and since I was a father of a friend, she thought I might be a good one to solve it. This was the difficulty: It was a cold day and her mother had decided on a hot lunch. She had given Susan forty-five cents for that purpose. Now Susan had lost the money. There were just five minutes more before the ticket sales closed. Could I lend forty-five cents? I had some change in a side

pocket and handed over the amount. She hurried off, bought the tickets—and that was that.

But when I returned after lunch, eight-year-old Susan had a new exchange problem. In listening to it I learned something. "I found my mother's forty-five cents she gave me. I put my hand into my pocket deep," she said, holding the sum in her upturned hand.

"That's good," I said, putting out *my* hand thinking she was about to give me the find and wipe out the debt.

"But I've spent your forty-five cents," she replied. "This is the money my mother gave me." She had a puzzled look. She was trying to organize two different sets of facts. (a) She had spent my forty-five cents. (b) The money she now had was her mother's.

I pulled back my hand and stopped to think. Why was this issue not a problem for me but was for Susan? It had something to do with meaning, symbols, words, as did Steven's problem. I could understand that the coins in Susan's pocket did not still belong to her mother, but "why didn't they?" I asked myself. Because their purpose had been achieved or, better, their value (for buying lunch) had been used up. That was it—their "value." There was a second idea that I was using in my thinking. That word and that concept I had, she did not. I went over that again—I had two ideas—the coins *and* their value, whereas Susan had just one. As with Steven I had a job to do. I could either contribute to her vocabulary or to her experience; either way might help her explore the way adults think.

I decided to try both together and explain how this value idea worked.

"Your mother gave you lunch money," I began.

"Yes," Susan said, taking a glance at the clammy coins in her hand.

"So you had lunch," I continued.

"Yes." She was thinking, I could see.

"So your mother doesn't have to get her money back?"

"No-o-o."

"So-o-o," I finished, feeling I had taught a good lesson. ". . . You could save yourself a trip over to our place," I

paused to let this sink in, "and give me the money here . . ." To me this sounded just as logical and neat as could be.

"But I'd be giving you Mommy's money," was Susan's reply. She was not indignant nor challenging the necessity of repayment, just questioning the means which I thought was self-evident. And so it was that although she was willing to go along with my reasoning, it had to make sense. Now it did not. The difficulty was not the same as Steven's, but it had an element of similarity.

Susan still had physically the same coins. This "your money"-"her money" mixup was caused by the physical sameness of the coins. She was right. The coins were the same, but they were also different in an invisible way. Language—a word—could clothe that difference and make it concrete. The difference needed a word to help it stand out. Susan had changed her original frown into a more relaxed look of study of the situation, so I made one more attempt to explain adult thinking. I tried the word "value" as a way of labeling the money. "You used up the value your mother gave you, Susan," I said.

But it did not work. "Mother's money" meant the physical thing, pure and simple. I decided not to risk any more explanation because I was beginning to sound overly committed to getting those coins and she was almost becoming suspicious. The coins she had were the ones she had been given. No doubt of that! And my coins were spent—no doubt of that either . . . 1-2-3-4 . . . The steps of her thinking were clear and scientific. The more abstract idea of money equalling value and that value now being expended she had not practiced, but she would.

I could have tried other methods and risked her suspicion of motive. I could, for example, have mixed the coins with others and then, in play, acted out the transference from Mother to Susan, from me to Susan, from Susan to ticket seller. Or we could have tried that with diagrams and drawings, but this was not the moment. Right then she was not ready or I did not have the way to express the idea. The development of her language and experience with similar situations will help the insight come, for, in such a back and forth

way, experience and naming, language and thought work all together to give children the tools to solve daily problems.

Parents and teachers can dig below the words and explore the logic the child is using by asking the following questions:

What does he see as different?

What does he see as being the same?

What does he see as following in sequence?

What words does he assume to mean the same?

What words does he consider different but that we assume are the same?

In his ordinary conversation, the child communicates the rules of thought he is exploring. And we, too, in our conversation can communicate to him other ways for him to converse. In our communication three *indirect* statements he should hear are—:

- that he is making sense
- but that there still is more to learn
- and that growing up is learning to put together not just one idea, but sometimes two or several.

The Beginning of Thought and Language

Children look up at the sky and puzzle over what is in endless space. Similarly, new parents look down at their baby and wonder at the universe in his mind. What must he be thinking? That was my question the first morning Sarah came home. She had been wrapped securely before leaving the hospital so that cold air was shielded from the new face. Underneath Sarah was awake—thinking, I supposed. But about what, and with what?

I took a quick look at her by hooking back the blankets with my finger. Beneath the covers her two eyes were wide open. She was doing something with the impressions she was receiving from the experience. Was that thinking? It could be, but that word seemed to be vague and obscure—as though I were imposing upon her some sort of adult definition on her fresh approach to experience. I decided "noticing" was a better way to describe whatever the complex process was. Perhaps it did not sound as significant and important as "thought," but it was a more practical definition likely to help

a parent understand really what the inborn abilities of his child are.

Back at home, I sat down to talk to the new member of the family myself. I settled into a position where I could, for my own satisfaction, explain to her who I was and what she could expect of me. She looked as if she might be interested in such a conversation. She was in front of me cradled on my legs that formed a bench on which I rested my arms. I could look at her directly, and she could do the same. She was now five days old, with the hint of dark hair; I decided I had been right to like her from the beginning. That automatic sort of affection would help us get along well. It was nature's contribution to a good start.

"What are you noticing?" I asked her.

She heard me; that was clear from the look I got. That meant she had noticed my talking—that was itself an evidence of an awareness, a beginning of thought. Her noticing changed fractionally every day, as does all children's. Her eye movements showed she was attending to the direction of voices and the places in which a face appeared, indicating she was discriminating, remembering, and beginning to link up details, thereby building the stock of familiarities which would be the introductory content of thought. Two weeks later (as had all the children born in the world that same day) Sarah had become interested in much more, increasingly selective in awareness and therefore in thought-like activity.

A baby's thought is a growing sharpness of discriminative awareness. Into the process of natural growth, language, the most developed system of focusing attention on experience adds its influence. We can make closer guesses to thought once language comes along, but "noticing" is a better word to begin with and makes the child's achievements nonetheless interesting.

Two shapes of thought are identifiable in the child's first three years:

i. natural noticing

ii. disciplined noticing—first without the aid of language, then with it. At birth the baby has the power of the first of these stages. He learns the other with the special help of distinctions that are marked out by his language. With the sub-

sequent help of words and phrases, he experiments with distinctions which at first he only notices vaguely. Thought begins with an awareness, then a familiarity, then comes the big leap to learning that things and qualities have names.

When the child names, he is practicing representing things. Later he will do the same by representing a ship or plane with a drawing or a model. At first, the representation is rough, then it becomes much more exact as skill with the definitions increases. Next comes the creative stage—making new ideas with the labels he has. Sarah showed me that stage in its early beginning—:

While we were out driving one Sunday afternoon, as though picking her way through the underbrush of choices, Sarah said, "Is that . . ." and then again, "Is that . . ." then more confidently, "Is that . . . is that—Uncle's office?" I looked up. There indeed it was—his office building.

She had made a connection between a person and a place and checked out her guess with words. She was making a trial run of an experiment in language and thought. Two months earlier, Sarah had made an early experiment with words and ideas which had prepared for his extended experiment. At that time she had come over to my chair, tugged at my arm, then led me to the front door. She was keenly interested in something. Perhaps I was to get something down from a high shelf? We went now in front of the open coat closet. In it hung a thick coat her mother had worn the previous winter. She touched the sleeve, but didn't say "coat," although she had a child word for "coat." Instead, she said her word for Mother. That struck me as unusual. She was not merely asking the coat's name, she was asking another question. "Is this my mother's coat?" That was it. The unstated question was: "Can you call this mama's coat?"

"Yes," I said, nodding, "that is your mother's coat."

That was enough. That is what she wanted. She wanted the confirmation of a guess—about whether she could refer to this object by another name. We adults do that every day. Somewhere we began with just such an exploration as this one. Someone or some experience told us we were right—language does work that way and so does thought. Out of the two words had come a third idea captured in and made usable

by language. And in turn language helped confirm the idea. With that idea as a foundation, more complicated ones could be built. Without this sort of practice with words, confirmation of that idea would have been slower coming and held in a less well-defined form. This was a beginning. Later, she would build this learning into the question we heard in the car, "Is that uncle's office?" She was expanding the connection she had confirmed: people, places, relationships can *also* be named. Her growing world had begun to make more sense—she was testing out the flexibility of the instrument of language to point out invisibles as well as concrete things like coat, milk, dog. Why had I almost overlooked the coat question? Because something was self evident. What seemed self evident to my adult experience? That two words, two ideas can be combined to make a third—that a word can stand for an invisible connection. An adult is used to that, but children have to explore its operation in ordinary conversation. In such ways the child searches for the rules of thought by exploring the principles that govern words and ideas. With sounds reminding her of her mother, Sarah had confirmed an idea that, without the spark leaping out of a word, would have remained longer, back in the mind uncommunicated to herself and others. In these ways, children are creating contours of their ideas.

Did Sarah notice my lumberjack shirt the night the doctor brought her down the maternity ward hallway? Probably not. At that time, I was one whole piece. Clothing, size, color were all together. As the days passed she saw that some parts altered while others did not; for example, shirts changed but my height did not. Eventually, shirt would stand out as a separate item and later language would name it completing the focusing on specifics in communicable form. By two years of age, children begin using more words to aid in the remembrance of differences. They help the mind hold on to, arrange, and sort them. An exploring one year old with arm outstretched towards the yellow ball says his word, "Ba ba." What does this sound/word mean? For him it means all and exactly that total thing he is pointing at—all its qualities (its shape, its uses, its color together).

A sound, like Mama, or an object, a toy, can be used in

different ways. He experiments with the ways it can be used. The same thing has different uses; different things can mean the same. Such realizations are the beginnings of symbolization. He finds that a word—mama for example—can be used to point out someone, something—that's one use, or to begin an interaction, that's another. Furthermore (and this is crucial) this word can mean *something else* (a coat, a shoe, a book, a car load of things, in fact). It can be attached to other names to add meaning. Here is the outer beginning of an inner awareness of great importance to the development of intelligence. What is this awareness?

- that one word or idea can be used to remind us of another,
- that two ideas can combine to make a third,
- that three ideas can highlight a fourth, and so on goes the process. With such awareness intelligence is set in motion. Language and ideas grow one with the other. Language development assists the development of thought. On the other hand, and at the same time, the growing organization of ideas assists in the development of language.

A Fast Breaking Curve

William P. J. Costello

Draw a circle the size of a quarter. Put a dot inside the circle. The circle represents reading, and the dot represents what we *know* about it. While some reading specialists would like to believe that the dot is what we *don't* know, the fact remains that we know precious little about what happens in a child's mind when he first becomes engaged in reading behavior.

For years, experts have spent their energies in a quest for the Holy Grail, that best method to *teach* reading. In the best tradition of ecclectic liberalism, they usually say "yes" to the tentative conclusion that the best method is to use a combination of all the methods until the next Method Messiah reveals the Way.

For the past four years I have been the director of the Center for Reading Improvement at San Francisco State University. Basically, what we do is to train college and high school students to tutor a child who reads poorly. And, much to the chagrin of the school system, most of the kids in the program have shown an average gain on standardized tests of fifteen months after three months of bi-weekly tutoring by the "non-certificated."

Curious and determined school persons call to find out what secret method we are using. I try to explain that we are not using any new method, approach, or machine. All we're doing is bringing back an old innovation, a one-to-one personal relationship.

Once, I tried to explain that the tutors are trained to use the standard methods of phonics, whole word, and language experience approach, as well as the traditional techniques for testing and diagnosis. Most important, I add that the tutors show the kids that they care about them.

During one of these conversations, I found myself engaged in the following dialogue.

School Person: We have been very impressed with the success you have had with our remedial readers.

Me: Thank you.

School Person: We would like to reach as many children as we can and teach them to read, too. So I would appreciate it if you could tell me what you are *using*.

Me: (Reciting the explanation that I have outlined) The kids respond because they know that the tutors care about them.

School Person: Oh, come on now, that can't be it. Are you going to tell me what you are using or not?

Me: (Perverse) All right, you've got me up against the wall—I'll tell you. . . .

School Person: (Sensing victory and the Grail) Yes?

Me: We've got . . . magic pencils.

School Person: (Fifteen second pause) Where can we get some?

It is time that we stop tripping over the pungent wake of remains left along the horse trail by those searching for the Grail. We need to give up the search for the *best way to teach reading* and ask ourselves, "How do kids *learn* to read? How does this kid learn to read? And what do I know that can help him or her?"

We don't know much. The dot is small, but in the course of watching 500 kids come to it in a flash of perception, recognition, and insight, I have noticed an interesting phenomenon. For lack of a better name, let's call it the Perception, Recognition, Insight Curve (PRI). The emergence of this clear pattern occurs when children are "learning to read." Overall, the pattern is one where the learner shows very little significant gain in reading level for a long time (something like three to fifteen months). Then he or she suddenly achieves a surge.

In general, the child *starts* at a reading level of about 3.0 or below and proceeds on an almost even-keel until he demonstrates a remarkable burst to about 6.0 or above. If the chart were a pitch, it would be a fast breaking curve. The child enters the curve as a dependent reader and tops out as an independent reader, someone who can read without any help.

An intriguing aspect of this phenomenon is that it seems to occur with the greatest consistency in the age group of children from twelve to fifteen. This seems to suggest some correlation to Lenneberg's theory of "critical periods."

To attempt to define what happens to a child while he breaks from dependent to independent reading, I have developed a simple hypothesis: Let's suppose that John, a dependent reader, needs to know seventy-three specific bits of data—sounds of letters, word structures, etc.—to be able to make order out of reading. These bits of data are essentially unknown to those who would teach John to read. He cannot name them for us or himself. He must take in whatever data are available and, rejecting what he already knows, he takes in what he knows he needs to complete his "reading set," all he needs to know to "get it." What seemingly occurs when John moves from dependent to independent reader is illustrated in the chart and consists of two major definable growth periods.

I. PERIOD OF PERCEPTION AND RECOGNITION
(Points X to Y on chart)

A. The gradual collection of bits of data that are relevant to the learner's personal needs and understanding.

B. The growing awareness of patterns:

1. He perceives that *there are* significant, repetitive patterns.
2. He recognizes some of these repeating patterns.
3. He generalizes from these patterns.

This period of Perception and Recognition varies in length of time, but once a child has collected the specific bits of data relative to his personal "reading set" and has de-

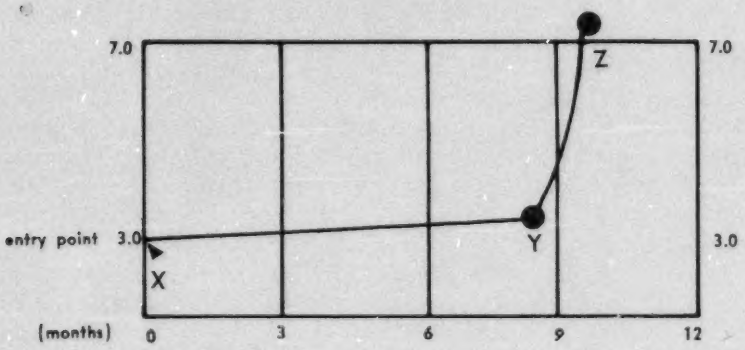
veloped an understanding of significant patterns, the period of rapid growth, insight, begins.

II. PERIOD OF RAPID GROWTH (Points Y to Z on chart)

A. The child has made the leap from a series of "mm . . . hm, mm . . . hm, mm . . . hm" to an "aha!" experience.

B. He has now collected all the bits of data necessary to operate his own personal "reading set."

He gets it. And, having experienced the fast breaking curve, he need never strike out again.



Reading and the Home Environment

Albert H. Koppenhaver

Reading has been of major importance to the human race since man first experimented with record keeping. All races and societies have made attempts to record and preserve their experiences so that others who follow may gain in enjoyment, wisdom, and understanding. The ability to read printed symbols was considered of practical value by Babylonians, Romans, Hebrews, and Puritans, as well as others of the historic past. With the development of educational systems, more complex social structures, and the explosion of man's knowledge, such reading today has assumed an even more vital role in human existence.

Educators have long realized that reading performs an important function in the civic, political, social, and economic phases of adult living. Unfortunately, many citizens, both children and adults, have been unable to develop the skills necessary for the effective reading of print. It is this group of citizens, specifically the children, who are posing an increasingly serious problem for the educational institutions of this nation. There are, however, a great number of pupils who can read, and read well. This group receives limited exposure in the mass media, little special attention in the schools, and minimal financial support. Thus, while there are many pupils with reading problems there are many more who read well. Needed is more knowledge about the conditions in the home which promote such success in reading.

SUMMARY OF RELATED RESEARCH

The Home and Achievement Motivation

Frymier(3), in pursuing the subject of motivation, found that positively and negatively motivated students differ markedly in their perceptions of time. The low-motivated student is typically preoccupied with the present, obsessed with the past, and fearful of the future. Those students who really want to learn are generally conscious of the present, past, and future, but do not freeze on one aspect of time as do their less motivated counterparts. The results of a study by

Coleman, et al.(1), point to a family background of boys with reading disability which includes a domineering mother who exerts pressure on her male child to develop "strength," often equating this strength with educational achievement. The child's ineffective approach to and feeling of inadequacy in the performance of educational tasks results from such parental pressure. Heilman(6) expands on this position when he reports that the home environment and patterns of overprotection, psychological rejection, excessively high standards, perfectionism, or unfilled psychological needs stemming from the family configuration, are related to reading failure.

Fostering Verbal Development

There is considerable evidence to support the belief that a child's language facility is a reflection of the background from which he comes. Focusing on oral language patterns of kindergarten children, Thomas(8) reported that by the time any child has reached school age, he has learned to speak in the intonation patterns, vocabulary, and grammar that are typical of the kind of language to which he has been exposed in his home and community. In some cases the typical language of a home is so deficient or different from that of the school environment that he will have difficulty encoding and decoding in an academic setting. Anna Harris(5) contended that children from some home environments lacked auditory discrimination and visual perception skills, had difficulty using abstract symbols, and were especially deficient in the use of complex language forms. This latter characteristic resulted from family language patterns used in a convergent rather than a divergent fashion. Harris alluded to the imperative or partial sentence pattern so typical of this environment. For example, if a child asked for something the response was often, "Yes," "No," "Go away," or "Later."

Family Activities

The promotion of family harmony is often dependent upon the activities in which it is engaged. Habits, attitudes, values, and ways of thinking appear to be behaviors learned from the family and modified to some degree by outside influences. Robinson et al.(7) equate reading interest and ability

to family activities. Such things as media use, family trips, and library usage were found to be highly related to success in reading. Ziller(11) emphasized the imitative aspects of reading. He reports a significant and positive relationship existed between success in reading and such experiences as looking at books and magazines, having someone read aloud, and being encouraged to show an interest in words, letters, and numbers. He concludes that the parents of more successful readers provided a better model for success in reading, i.e., were more frequent users of books and more fond of words. The writings of Wilson and Hall(9) additionally place great stress on family activities which involve the child.

THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

The major problem undertaken in this study was to investigate the relationship between various home environment factors and the reading achievement of fifth grade children. In this study, home environment was viewed as being composed of a number of subenvironments, each exerting influence upon reading achievement. For this reason the more superficial aspects of home environment, that is, socioeconomic status of parents and factors commonly associated with it, were not studied. The focus of this investigation was on the nature of the interaction between parents and their children and the relationship of that interaction to reading success.

The Purpose of the Study

There is an apparent need to ascertain the factors related to reading achievement in a more penetrating fashion than has been the case earlier. As one scans the profusion of literature on the subject it becomes evident that many facets of the problem have been reasonably well explored. Many have analyzed the mode, materials, and timing of instruction, as well as the diverse physical, psychological, social, and mental factors. Though valuable knowledge has been gained from such investigations, the mass of information often seems to be of a somewhat general and sometimes superficial nature. More recent investigations have given credence to the view that the home environment of an individual may exert greater

influence on learning to read than previously believed. But unfortunately, many studies in this area also seem to share the common characteristic of superficiality. The basic weakness found in these investigations has been the use of a general index of social status or economic well-being to characterize a home environment. Indices of this type usually represent a summation of a number of symptoms or surface characteristics of the home environment, and studies using them yield little information about the particular ways in which specific environmental factors may influence the development of a child's reading performance.

Additional knowledge relating to the influence of adults as they interact in a home environment with children, and knowledge of its relationship to a level of reading competency attained by a pupil may provide insight into ways of alleviating deficiencies and fostering success. This study was designed to probe more deeply into the relationship between environmental factors as they exist in the home and the degree of reading success of pupils.

Theoretical Framework

A random sample of 30 high-achieving and 30 low-achieving readers was selected for study from a population of 739 fifth-grade pupils enrolled in a suburban southern California school district. It was theorized that this size sample was representative of the total population. Identification of the high and low-achieving readers was accomplished through use of the Harris(4) formula. It was assumed the two sample groups had a common background with the exception of one characteristic—that of reading achievement in relation to reading expectancy. The school district was characterized by a stable enrollment and relatively homogeneous socioeconomic status of its school patrons according to data obtained from district statistics and the local chamber of commerce.

Main Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were to be tested: (1) There is a significant relationship between scores on measures of reading achievement and environment. (2) There is a significant difference between mean scores of high and low IQ pupil

groups on a measure of home environment. (3) There is a significant difference between the sex of pupils and scores on a measure of home environment when IQ is held constant. (4) High-achieving readers will be significantly differentiated from low-achieving readers by scores on selected sub-tests of a measure of home environment.

Overview of Analyses of Data

Three statistical procedures were used to test the hypotheses established for the study. A one-way analysis of variance was used to test the first two hypotheses and an analysis of co-variance procedure, in which the IQ was held constant, was used to test the third hypothesis. Hypothesis four was tested through use of discriminant analysis for two groups.

Main Findings

As revealed by this study, the major findings included the following:

1. There was a qualitative difference in the academic and intellectual environments of the homes of the two groups in favor of the high-achieving readers. The difference in mean scores of the two groups of readers on each of the two measured environments exceeded the .01 level of confidence. Additionally, when comparisons were made between the mean scores of the two groups of readers on the subscores of both the academic and intellectual environments, all differences exceeded the .01 level of confidence and were found to favor the high-achieving readers. The six sub-scores of the academic environment were:
   a. The climate created for achievement motivation.
   b. The opportunities provided for verbal development.
   c. The nature and amount of assistance provided in overcoming academic difficulty.
   d. The activity level of the significant individuals in the environment.
   e. The level of intellectuality in the environment.
   f. The kinds of work habits expected of the individual.

   The three subscores of the intellectual environment were:
   a. The stimulation provided for intellectual growth.

b. The opportunities provided for and emphasis upon verbal development.

c. The provision for general types of learning in a variety of situations.

2. There was no significant difference in the mean scores for either the academic or intellectual environments of the homes when pupils were grouped on the basis of intelligence into high and low IQ groups. Examination of the subscores for each of these two environments also failed to disclose significant differences in mean scores for the two groups.
3. No significant difference between the sex of pupils and scores on the academic and intellectual environments of the home was found when IQ was held constant. Subsequent examination of the subscores composing these two major environments also failed to reveal any significant differences.
4. The data revealed that the high-achieving group of readers was differentiated from the low-achieving group of readers by two subscores of the Wolf Scale. In order of their ability to differentiate, these two subscores were: (a) stimulation provided for intellectual growth, (b) opportunities provided for and emphasis upon verbal development. The differences between the mean scores on these two subtests were significant at the .01 level.

Conclusions

The academic and intellectual environments of the home, and the nine subenvironments of which they were composed, were analyzed as to their relationship to reading scores of fifth grade pupils. The data have led to the following conclusions:

1. The quality of home environment was positively related to reading achievement of the fifth grade students in the study.
2. There was found to be no significant difference between the IQ scores of pupils and scores obtained on a measure of home environment. The findings of the study revealed no statistically significant difference between sex and quality of home environment.

3. High-achieving readers were significantly differentiated from low-achieving readers by scores on subtests of a measure of home environment. Two subscores were identified which did differentiate the two classes of readers.

IMPLICATIONS

1. The findings of the present study would indicate that schools might profitably develop programs to make parents more aware of the importance of home environment in the reading achievement of children. Since it appeared that one of the causes of difficulty in learning to read was related to a "deficient" home environment, the development of this type of program is imperative. Ways should be found to fund a program to assist parents to improve home stimulation in the interest of better reading achievement by their children.
2. Inasmuch as many of the process characteristics which compose the home environment, as measured, are educationally malleable, school staffs should examine the possibility of providing curricular experiences for children who come from less than substantial environments. In this manner, chances for success in reading could be improved for such children.
3. Schools should not assume that the quality of home environment is affected by the IQ or the sex of a child. Experiences provided for children should be based upon assessment of home environment itself.
4. While high scores on the Wolf Scale were related to high reading achievement, two particular subscores, stimulation provided for intellectual growth, and opportunities provided for and emphasis upon verbal development, were isolated which sharply discriminated between high and low-achieving readers. The high predictive ability of these specific subscores should occasion schools to direct their attention to the process characteristics which compose them.
5. Parents should provide a home environment which enhances intellectual growth and emphasizes verbal development. Higher reading achievement in their children could result from such efforts. Process characteristics related to

intellectual growth are: (a) nature of intellectual expectations of the child, (b) nature of intellectual aspirations for the child, (c) information about the child's intellectual development, and (d) the nature of rewards for intellectual accomplishments. Process characteristics related to verbal development are: (a) emphasis on the use of language in a variety of situations, (b) opportunities provided for enlarging vocabulary, (c) emphasis on correctness of language usage, and (d) the quality of language usage of the parents.

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The Vanishing Quality of the Young Child's Learning Environment

Jay K. Bishop

And so, the importance in our lives of written forms of communication continues to erode due to forces bound within and around our electronic media. This was ably suggested by Professor Albert Friedman of this University at this same gathering in 1965. (1) As he pointed out, the process by which messages are communicated becomes radically different when one shifts from a linear, written word sequence to a multi-sensory form of participation through a pattern of electronic dots splashed across an ionized screen. Some have argued that the erosion of the written word which has served civilization so well and which has obviously freed man from his tribal state of dependence upon oral traditions, is not a negative factor. Rather, it is argued these new media provide fresh extensions for man which may well carry him into a new culture. (2,15)

What I propose to do here this morning is to reflect on some problems involved in this shift to a multi-sensory, multi-dimensional form of participation. I shall posit that within this movement to a new culture lies a trend away from focused specific activities for all those exposed to its pulse and pattern. And that, as a result, our psychological thinking systems monitoring these activities are becoming less refined. We telephone rather than write, view TV or go to a movie rather than read a book. In the doctor's office we flip through picture magazines rather than read an illustrated article. While this shift in cognitive focus may be occurring to all adults and children in school, this is not the main focus of my remarks. Our supreme casualty is still at home, exploring about the house and near surroundings, or he is being shuttled routinely to and from a care setting. He is somewhere between the ages of 3 and 30 months, living moment to moment under the watchful nurture of his primary or secondary attachment figures.

We have been told that the ages below five are particularly important for the development of a code for relating

with others and himself and for learning how to learn.(3) The last 27 months within this 0-5 span is particularly crucial for learning self-other relationship skills and programs for bringing in new information.(4) Meanwhile, various forces bear heavily on the learning environment of today's young child. To illustrate this point, I shall describe briefly three dimensions within the child's world which at one time in the past contained good learning material, but which today are sources of serious problems. The first concerns the increasing obscurity of the primary attachment figure. The second dimension deals with the fading away of production oriented themes in the child's day to day place of learning. The third involves media domination of activities within and around the Sunday family gathering.

The Increasing Obscurity of the Primary Attachment Figure

By attachment we refer to a kind of binding mechanism studied by ethologists, specialists in learning, and those of psychoanalytic disposition. All theories tend to agree on the time when attachment maintaining behaviors seem to be at their peak and the form these behaviors take under conditions of separation, or the introduction of a stranger into the child's field of view.(5) They postulate that there are behaviors particular to the species such as clinging, crying, sucking and following, which promote or initiate the process of attachment. Over evolutionary time these behaviors have functioned as adaptive mechanisms, maintained because of their survival value. They bring the child into close proximity with the mother and activate in her certain nurturing responses. In time these simple action-reaction, cry change and feed behaviors become incorporated into various feedback systems of considerable complexity. Hence, the power of this primary attachment figure, who is usually the mother, although not necessarily, cannot be underestimated. Although attachment may develop normally without an exclusive one-caretaker-to-one-infant relationship, as in kibbutz and extended family systems, even in these cases there is usually one person who has a distinct relationship with the child.(6)

Within the one-to-one relationship the child develops an awareness that he can effect changes in the environment by

vocalizing. In his cry he can bring mom who will pick him up. Later he learns to discriminate between people and between things. Here the more important cues are variety and contingency of stimulation. People have the greatest repertoire of sights and sounds. They provide stimulation and they tune into the infant's signals. All such events direct the child's attention to people as sources of information and interest. Infants smile at people, bringing delighted reciprocation from baby lovers everywhere. However, before the infant can invest positive feelings in another person, he must be capable of responding to distinctive cues from that person. He learns the program for which cues are relevant from his interactions with the primary caretaker, and these take time to acquire. All such delicate learnings are placed within the 3 to 30 month time period mentioned earlier. For example, within the last 10 months of this two year once-in-a-lifetime venture, the child shows specific expectations of the mother.(7) He may make certain movements with his arms or back indicating his intentions that certain things should follow. Here we see a rudimentary form of object permanence developing. He shows by his behavior that he can respond differently to mom than he does to strangers. She can sooth him or provide objects necessary for his gratification. He evidences confidence in leaving the mother and exploring a strange environment, secure in the knowledge that his mother will be there to comfort him if need be. She is predictable and he investigates and smiles with strangers having trust that people are sources of interest, information and comfort. Although attachment changes qualitatively over a lifetime, feelings of trust and positive emotional involvement remain core elements in all our relationships.

It takes time, warm contact, and comforting interactions of all types for the child's simple cry-get-fed interactions to become locked into these complex feedback systems. However, media and mobility born forces are obscuring this relationship. The stable world of the small town has become absorbed into an ever shifting suburbia and children are growing up in a different kind of environment now than they were in our time.(8) Children are spending their free time with informal

groups or in organized programmes — school, boy and girl clubs, hockey teams and interest groups. We now place children younger than school age in day nursery facilities, play schools, kindergartens, and with sitters. The trend has been on-going for the past ten years and will continue in an ever increasing rate for the next ten. Our whole socioeconomic structure is moving toward a society of temporary systems, taking the form of small task forces organized around problems to be solved by groups of relative strangers. Even marriage and child rearing may become tied to a particular locality and task. (9)

I do not think that the young child's evolutionarily coded system for acquiring mechanisms for attachment and learning can handle the tenuousness of temporary systems. You know the literature on the consequences of partial or non-existing attachment. Even under the occasions of brief separation, family reared children show lingering negative behavior following reunion with the parents, even where the reason for the separation may be no more unusual than the birth of a second child. (10) Some children seem helped by the separation, so we cannot say that dividing mom and child must be eliminated at all costs. However, as mobility increases, forces to maintain it also increase such that mom cannot help herself. There is no reinforcement for her to stay put and remain at home; no interest in consoling and occupying a crying, clingy attachment-seeking infant. She may find it easier to sneak quickly away when leaving her child with a sitter. In fact, spin-off from the behavior modification movement seeps unwittingly into our day to day "informal" child rearing theory to the extent that mom and care agent may planfully ignore the child's protests in order to extinguish them. When the child's behaviors move into the rhythmic sobbing, desperate silence, sucking of fingers and aimless rolling about heralding the despair phase as delineated by Robertson, Bowlby et al., agents and mom all register relief that the child is now "adjusting quite nicely." Mothers caught up in this mobility paradigm may not be sensitive to signs of harmful stress nor can they be freed to do anything about it if they were. The resolution to find Junior "a new sitter next week" may be too late.

The Fading of Production Oriented Themes

The place is any street in North America, the home of a child 12 to 30 months of age. The home is busy; members rarely start the day together. Dad may tend shop in the corporate community, commuting to and from work. He leaves before the rest of the family arises and if the family lives in the suburbs, freeway time could be over an hour each way. The other children may rise singly, nibble kernels of sugared cereal or munch a fold-over peanut butter sandwich, then move out to join their friends at school. If the family is of the one-parent variety, quality contacts shorten even further. This parent works at two jobs so free time and energy remain a premium, and the home becomes a bedroom—a place to sleep and recuperate for the onslaught of the next day. Under such conditions family interactions with the small one are usually minimal.

Time spent moving from place to place, assembling briefly on weekends, makes people much more self-oriented. They must be in order to survive. As Slater indicates:

> The massed media tell us continuously to satisfy emotional needs with material products, particularly those involving oral consumption of some kind. Our economy depends upon our willingness to turn to things rather than to people for gratification, to symbols rather than to our body. The gross national product will reach its highest point when a material object can be interpolated between every itch and its scratch." (11)

So family members are not interacting as frequently; they are probably more self-oriented and their skills for coping with various interactions have diminished. Priority restrictions on time mean fewer projects of the construction type in the home yielding grave consequences to the child's learning domain. Areas hardest hit seem to be the family food processing systems in the backyard, kitchen and dining sectors of our young child's world.

Picture this scene—mom, to save time, pulls a covered pie plate out of a grocery sack and pops it into the oven. "It's going to be a pie for dessert," she says. As she moves, the youngster hears the rustle of paper, sees the oven door open, feels the heat of the preset oven. He hears her say something

about pie. If the child knew what a pie was, he may make the simple tie between the past experience and the thing going into the oven, but this is about all. If the pie were made from scratch, the child would see his mother in action over an extended period of time. He would have pulled up a chair to watch and he would have gotten in the way. Naturally, a propensity to egocentricism puts him smack in the middle of all action. He now smells, tastes and pats the filling, rolls and nibbles the dough, as he functions within the living space of his role model and teacher. Mother would have poured, measured and weighed, stirred and beaten as she functioned next to our young producer.

Compare the learning value to the child of the two pie-making sequences. One youngster participated fully in several events, the other did not. One more clearly saw the mother as producer, the other did not. However, it is less expensive to serve, quicker and easier to prepare pre-mixed foods such as spaghetti, fish and chips, macaroni and cheese, and even pie. Our time-trimmed living space leaves stewing sauces and multi-step pie baking impossible to manage. Times for planning and executing must be cut and ordered. In addition, dietary variety proves hard to maintain without extra time and cash resources. Notice that prepared food manufacturers command prime family viewing time and they also both reflect and maintain the harried pace demands of families on the go.

The constant use of premade products all wound into the telephone rather than write syndrome mentioned earlier, can affect adult learning strategies as well. We avoid picking out the tastes in prepared salad dressings. We either like them or we do not. Supper table comments like, "I put too much garlic in the dressing," or "The gravy seems tart," reflect your vigilance and gives the child a cause and effect relation, provided the child can taste and has some rudimentary scheme for salad and gravy making. Hence, preparing foods yourself provides a paradigm of analytic-synthetic behavior which enhances your collective propensities for future producing.

I see certain counter reactions to the processsed food movement. Among them lies our growing interest in wine and gourmet cooking. A quick survey of cookbook shelves in Edmonton showed a range of from 25 to 90 different varieties of

"gourmet" publications. These books were grouped into classes, including books for nature cooking; the country originating the recipes, the item to be cooked such as cheese, pastry or meat; a place for doing the cooking such as at the table or in the back yard; the ethnic group involved; and those dealing with a particular time of year. All publications in paperback form had gaily colored covers and sold for under four dollars, a definite attempt to bring "gourmetdom" to the average house on the street. However, "quality" cooking costs more per serving, so it is usually saved for special occasions, and usually precludes our infant in the eating. Although he may have a piece of the preparing action, mom is more likely to whisk him out of the way due to the importance of the process, the cost of the ingredients, and the impending presence of her guests.

Advocating a return to the "good old days" is utter nonsense. However, there were some very good built-in learning systems in the family food processing and eating of yesteryear. This is 1974, and families are stimulated to go and do. Time corners must be cut and these are usually the ones closest to our young child.

The Media and the Sunday Family Gathering

Several years ago Bronfenbrenner pointed out that the average North American child watched from 12,000 to 15,000 hours of television by the time he is 16 years old.(12) In other words, he has spent the equivalent of 15 to 20 solid months, 24 hours a day, before a television screen. By 18 he will have spent more time watching the video screen than he would working in school. More recent figures show the amount of viewing even higher.(13) Choat reports that sugared, sweetened or crisped (fried) food products are hammered at kids at the rate of 12 minutes per hour. A few years ago, it was even higher.(14) By the end of a year these children have seen as many as 5,000 different food commercials, let alone various hard sell inserts dealing with toys, pills, cars and soap. Despite this gross saturation of soft ware, studies matching TV watching with Gross National Product, achievement on standardized tests, and I.Q., show no clearcut relationships.(15) Those that exist are no doubt complex, requiring

carefully conceived and executed studies over life spans. I wonder if such efforts are even worth contemplating since, if the McLuhan hypothesis has any merit, influences are ubiquitous and exponential. As such we would all be imprinting media bound codes incapable of finding reference points limiting objectivity.

Our electronic media require no special training in order for us to participate. It is created for majorities and cheap to use.(16) We look, participate for the moment, shift our attention with the scene change, participate for the moment and then move on, following the story of the drama, comedy, musical or talk show over its prescribed 47 minutes of content with three breaks for commercials. Watching is a group activity where everything is moment to moment experiencing. Our toddler now bounces from Grandma's to Uncle George's lap, then down on the floor to pull the dog's hair or to play with a bauble. Even his play may have the investment and meter of his television watching superiors. Moment to moment he attends, then shifts, pushing at his popper toy, grasps, mouths, and releases various graduated plastic cups. Much of the toddler's action duplicates the normal sensory-motor fare described by Piaget and others, but some attributes are different. His actions become more subdued and less complete. In the first place, the room seems darker and objects do not stand out as clearly. He finds it much more difficult to attend, monitor and invest in function relations events brought about by such acts as poking the ball with a stick and having it roll into the block tower, knocking it apart. And then, who would be there to put it back up? The softer lighting also makes it more difficult to see changes in perspective between ball and background as the trajectory continues. In addition, vocalizations must be kept to a minimum. Excited talking or squeals of pleasure become dampened, the family must have its sanctity. The higher the program value the greater the restrictions on any incidental need, bang or vocalization.

In general, fast pacing programs of the human foible variety are most likely to capture the family's interests. Because these programs command strict attention, the toddler is often whisked to another room to play by himself, eat something or go to sleep. Often the primordial rearing system is too oc-

cupied to rear him. The experiential richness, for the child, of this domestic potpourri reaches its peak on Sunday evenings, after dinner between the hours of five and eight. Ordinarily Tad would place himself center stage and command everyone's attention with his and their "whose boy are you," "what's that," and "peek-a-boo" antics. However, today's families have been cognitively seduced by media who invest top money and talent into doing just that. I might add that the evening commercials include "nifty" time saving ways of serving their prepared product which, if mom uses it, will supply the next day's lesson.

Without the media our family would have talked, cracked nuts, told stories, sung, played games, argued politics and so on. Part of this time they would have unilaterally attended to Tad. Now, over the course of such watching, family members have lost countless opportunities to interact with the child. They are not seeing his many assaults attempting to mount a chair, his bicycle pump dance movements, his explorations of a tissue box or the testings of the buoyancy properties of the things in his milk. So their knowledge repertoire lacks information on the child's discovery strategies and efforts to affect means and relations. It goes without saying that adult reinforcement programs which miss these acts often bend the child's activities away from extended discoveries to a selfdom of internal survival. Without a match between what the child does and what the family sees and talks about, the toddler's actions, in a productive sense, diminish severely.

A Final Statement

And so, the media and its attending forces carry us into a new culture. Who knows the character of the impact these forces will have on the intellectual life of coming generations? They will certainly alter our cognitive focus, shape our picture of the world and bring vast changes into the learning environment of young children. Historians are just beginning to study developments emitting from the replacement of print for script during the Renaissance.(17) Here typology endowed scholarship with new powers; it brought writers, artisans, scientists, and craftsmen together through a common medium. It gave each multiple focus in review and selection of

a problem or task, provided a medium through which multiple meaning could be written, read and fused into some emerging work plan. It also supplied a vantage for viewing an array of past events from a fixed reference and did so through co-ordinated efforts of countless writers, publishers, and printers in different areas with varying materials and technical resources. And so, print provided more opportunities for intellectual investment, exchange and production to Renaissance man and to us who are his descendants. Will the media do as much for ours?

Although all formulations remain speculative, their validity lie in the accuracy of my examples and their universality throughout all population centres of our society. There are families who by fortune and/or persistence, resist being swallowed into this vortex. Many rural families and their urban parents take the time to be with their children during this crucial 0-3 growing-up age; but this is not enough and their parents' exceptionality reinforces the validity of my remarks.

Efforts to bring quality experiences back into the young child's world wax nobly indeed. We have Sesame Street, The Electric Hour, field trips to the animal farm and "see and share" walks in the neighborhood on Wednesday afternoons between 2:00 and 3:00. Much of what is available remains contrived by well-meaning folk who think they know what events young children attend to and inculcate readily. Yet, even these lack the authenticity of the kind of "real experiences" of which I speak.

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Turning the Corner for the Learning Center in California Colleges

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In surveying the Learning Center movement in California's colleges and universities, we found an awkward and idealistic adolescent, torn between a clumsy rate of growth and a firm commitment to change the educational system. While searching to define himself, he remains unsure, unsettled and unstaid, but intent upon improving higher education by mixing convention with innovation.

Offering a personalized alternative within an impersonalized system, the Learning Center is just now beginning to attain stability and professional recognition. We can hardly provide a definite report on the *state* of these Centers since such a report would be premature. The Learning Center in California's colleges is developing in such a kaleidoscopic manner that we found little uniformity in their names or functions. The names themselves are a study in variety. These centers have been referred to as Developmental Learning Labs, Learning Assistance Centers, Instructional Media Centers, Individual Study Centers, Learning Resource Centers, Study Skills Centers, Reading/Writing Centers, and simply Learning Centers.

If there is little consistency in their names, less is found in their functions. In our survey of 66 California community colleges and universities, for example, Learning Centers list the following services in rank order: 1. Reading 2. Tutoring 3. Study Skills 4. Writing 5. Math 6. Counseling; 60% of these Learning Centers offer credit for classes or competency based tasks. The scope of these Centers encompasses everything from ESL to the GRE, from assisting college freshmen to assisting college teachers, from remedial English to advanced accounting.

But the Learning Center concept is not merely a synergistic marriage of an English department to an audio-visual center. Far more than a reading lab, it is a necessary ally to

a reading program; not merely an innovative media library, it does make extensive use of educational technology. Not merely a study skills center, it does provide a student with the opportunity to acquire the rudimentary academic techniques. What distinguishes a Learning Center from media centers is its emphasis upon learning skills, attitudes and motivations. It differs from the content instructional services of media centers with its emphasis "not on facts and information, but rather on the learning process and on the skills and attitudes of the individual learner."(1) Thus the Learning Center is primarily characterized as a facility where the most effective resources are matched to the diagnosed needs of a student. It is not a sterile substitute for the classroom, but a valuable supplement which focuses on learning how to learn. It is designed to facilitate learning at any and all levels of education by accommodating a variety of learning styles.

The emphasis is on an individualized diagnostic/prescriptive methodology by a student-oriented learning practitioner. He is pragmatic using whatever facilitates the learning experience.

> The typical learning center director and his staff have relinquished any hold they have had on the academic dream; that is, the process of getting a degree and clearing the curricular hurdles is necessarily an enlightening, valuable, humanizing process that produces better, happier citizens. Rather using a systems approach to reading study skills attainment, the learning practitioner concentrates on helping students stay in the academic race, while taking no ethical position on the real or fancied virtues of degreemanship.(2)

It has been pointed out as rather anomalous that a specific agency should be established, such as a Learning Center, to perform the objective for which the entire institution exists. This is similar to building a chapel inside the cathedral. Is not the entire college a Learning Center? What then, justifies the establishment of a Learning Center?

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

In the last ten years the Learning Center has evolved from a mere peripheral activity of a reading lab into an in-

tegral part of the college curriculum. This is especially true in the state's community colleges which were first to recognize a need for intensive remedial instruction. The Learning Center in the community college is designed "for the failure-oriented student who must have guidance in selecting realistic goals, not simply on a single occasion when he first registers in college, but continuously during the instructional process."(3)

The need for a remedial oriented Learning Center is most pronounced within the community college because its open enrollment programs have altered the complexion of the student populations. Statistics show that the open door is most often a revolving door. Of 270,000 freshmen entering California junior colleges in 1965, 70% failed to meet requirements for college transfer English classes; of the freshmen enrolling in Remedial English, only a small percentage transferred to the college English course.(4) At El Camino College, a community college in California, in 1970, course attrition was 23%.(5) Antithetical to the philosophy advising these students be admitted on academic probation(6), the Learning Center has become the refuge for high risk students.

While some universities have provided leadership for the Learning Center movement, most notably California State University, Long Beach, there is little on the four year level to compare with the Centers at such places as El Camino College, East Los Angeles College, and San Bernardino Valley College. It is here that the Learning Center first gained a foothold and has now begun to mature. Because these institutions are more sensitive to the needs of all students, they try to accommodate disadvantaged students in some other way than providing them with a semester of English A. "Other than the Learning Center, no prospective agency or unit now on the academic scene appears to meet the emerging needs of a diversified student group" with particular learning disabilities.(7) If we accept Carman's assumption(8) that we must classify the educational experiences of half of all junior college students as failure, then it is truly amazing that it has taken most colleges until the 1970's to realize the potential for augmenting the learning experiences of these students with something other than basic reading/writing courses.

One of the most successful of these Learning Centers is

the one developed at El Camino College under the guidance of Gene Kerstiens. Independent of any department, it began in a humanities classroom in 1965 and after a sojourn in the Math and Engineering building, the Learning Center moved to its present location in 1973 in the Library basement. Characterized by an informal atmosphere, it provides a multiplicity of functions from those of an ombudsman's office to a career counseling center.

UNIVERSITIES

But the community college has not only opened its own doors, it has consequently thrown open the doors of the university for many students who otherwise would have been prevented from continuing their college careers. The Learning Center in the university does not focus on remediation with the same intensity as the community college. One state university describes a non-existent Learning Center in its catalogue as attempting to promote the development of better utilization of the university's resources in diagnosing and treating learning disabilities.

However, the state's universities are beginning to make larger commitments to this concept, not only as remedial agencies, but as support systems to assist the learning process at all stages of development. For instance, the Learning Assistance Center at California State University, Long Beach, which has been funded for the past two years by the Chancellor's Task Force on Innovation for the California State University and Colleges, attempts to mobilize all existing campus, community, and CSUC resources—including people, facilities, programs, research, equipment, and materials—to help learners learn more in less time with greater ease and confidence.(9) It serves students, faculty, staff and administrators. For instance, it maintains individualized programs on executive time management, parliamentary procedures, and content areas.

Although some progress is being made, the Learning Center faces many problems in the universities which do not exist in the community colleges. "Large numbers of university teachers and administrators continue to resist impending developments in educational technology and to be doubtful of

their results. "In this particular regard, it was once observed that college teachers are inclined to hold progressive views regarding everything but the practice of their own profession: teaching."(10) Because the state universities have cultivated their own peculiar brand of institutional inertia and the needs of a changing student population are diluted by the university's emphasis on research and scholarly performance, the Learning Center concept does not enjoy the same administrative support on the four-year level as it does on the junior college level.

ADMINISTRATION

It is not exactly clear what the most beneficial or appropriate administrative organization for the Learning Center is, and this continues to be a major problem for it. Our survey found little consistency with 29% of these centers administered by student personnel services, 21% by instructional services, 17% by counseling centers, and 14% by English departments. Some Centers are administrative orphans, changing departments or colleges as their objectives and functions are continually being re-assessed.

It is obvious that if a Learning Center purports to fulfill campus-wide needs, being a subsystem of the English or psychology department is confining. Student personnel services is another alternative, but its relationship with academic departments can impede the operations of a Learning Center, particularly in its relationship with the faculty. While the relative merits of placing the Center under the Dean of Instruction are subject to debate, there is much to be said for an arrangement which places the Center at the heart rather than at the periphery of instructional planning and development.(11) Since the Learning Center performs such unique functions, it has created some unique problems. Ultimately, the choice is dictated by the particular needs of the institution and the personalities of the key administrators.

STAFFING

It is probably "not an overstatement to say that the philosophy of a Learning Center mirrors almost without distortion the philosophy and personality of the director."(12)

It is limited only as his horizons are, but the effective director is a unique combination of administrator, teacher, counselor, tutor and friend. Obtaining personnel to staff Learning Centers is perhaps one of the most fundamental problems it faces. M.A. or Ph.D. degrees in English, reading, psychology, educational technology, or instructional development are all inadequate for the breadth of activities the Learning Center practitioner is responsible for.

CONCLUSION

Anyone who has attempted to individualize any curricula understands that the largest problem is convincing the teacher to re-assess his role, from content expert to resource person. This problem is greatly magnified in higher education by faculty who sanctify the lecture as the singular mode of effecting learning. It has taken our educational system over 1900 years to begin implementing the advice of Quintilian:

> Moreover, by far the larger proportion of the learner's time ought to be devoted to private study. The teacher does not stand over him while he is writing or thinking or learning by heart. While he is so occupied, the intervention of anyone, be he who he may, is a hindrance.

But there are numerous signs of increasing commitment to Learning Centers on the part of institutions of higher education. Perhaps the problems of enrollment, student needs, financial support have created a vacuum which only the Learning Center can fill. Of the Centers surveyed, well over half indicated their programs became operational after 1970. For California's colleges, the message is clear: the Learning Center movement will continue to gain momentum, providing a valuable personal learning experience which will significantly alter the complexion of higher education within the state and nation.

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